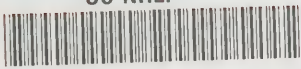
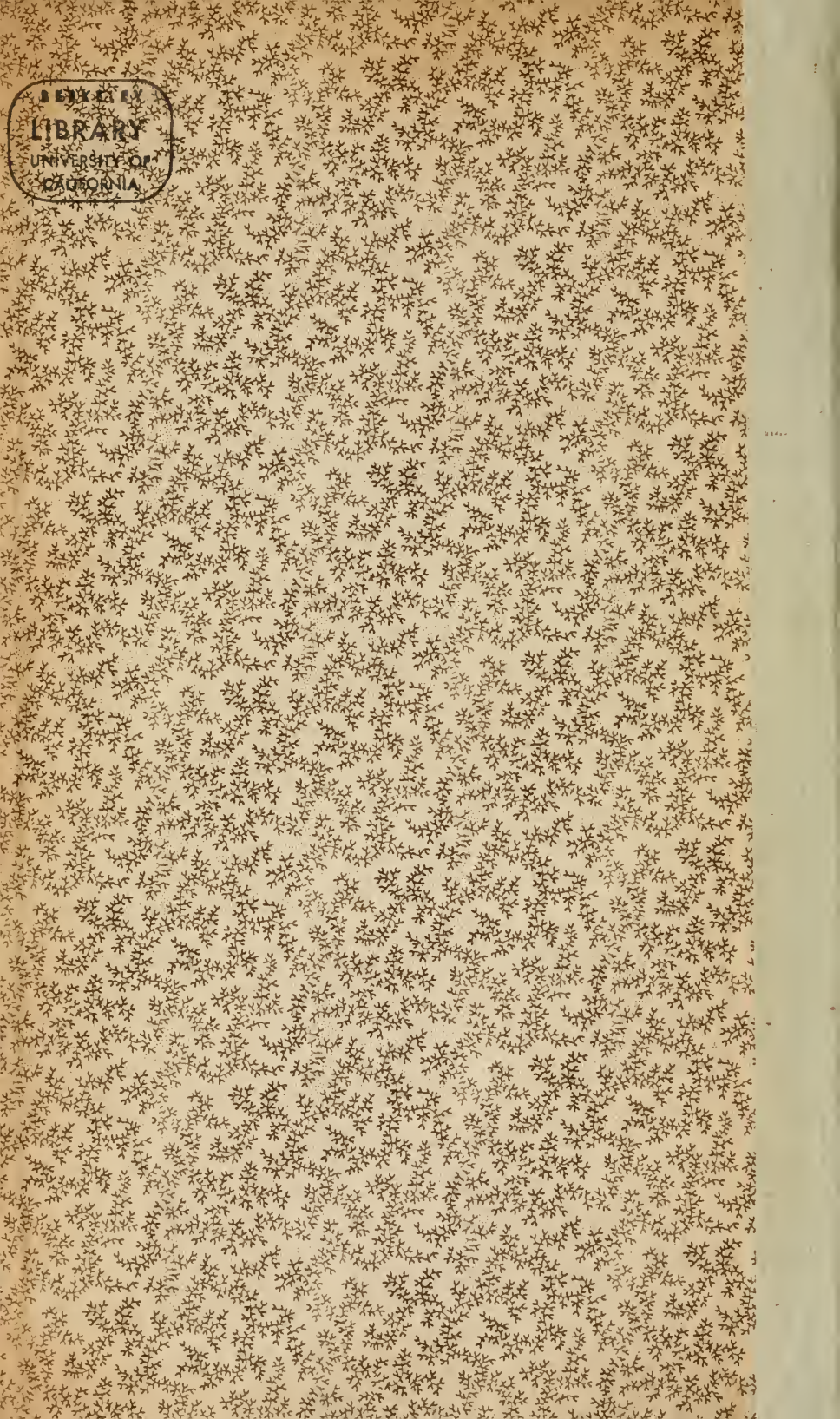


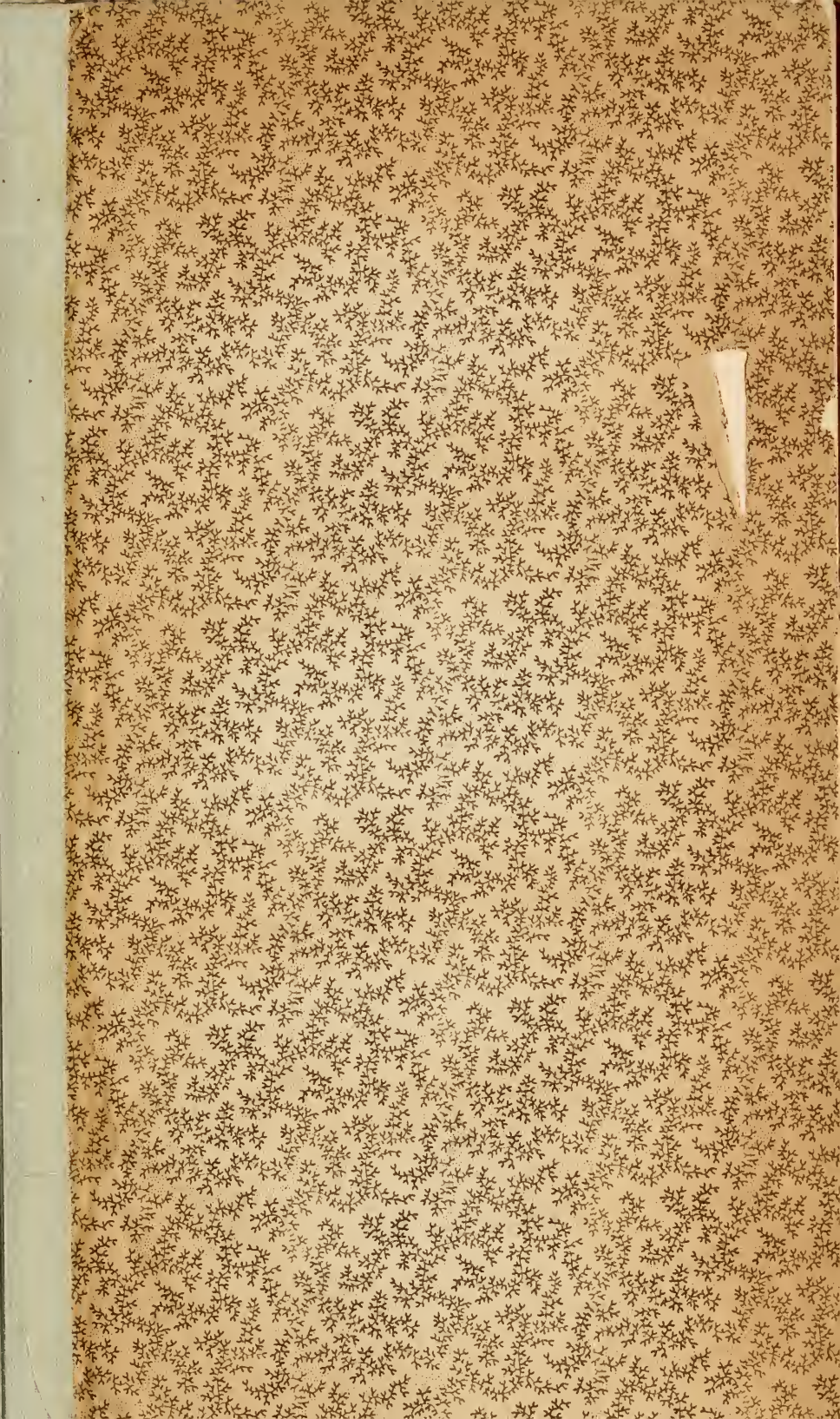
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SONGS AND POEMS:

In Three Parts.

BY

THOMAS TOD STODDART, Esq.

AUTHOR OF THE "DEATH WAKE," "SCOTTISH ANGLER," &c.

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TO
ALEXANDER WOOD, JUN., Esq.,
ADVOCATE,

These Poems are inscribed

AS A MARK OF
ESTEEM AND FRIENDSHIP,

BY THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

THE effusions embodied within the following pages, were written at various times and under various impulses. Some of them, the author alludes more especially to a portion of the Angling Songs, have already appeared in a scattered form among one or other of his former productions; the greater number, however, are of recent composition.

For the tripartite classification adopted, no apology is thought necessary, except in so far as the assortment of the subjects handled is in a very few instances departed

from, by the introduction of poems and sonnets, which, strictly speaking, are not in exact accordance with the character of the title under which they stand classed.

The author, however, indulges in the belief, that a departure from method so trivial will not very materially affect the proportions of the volume in the eyes of its readers, or do injury to that spirit of harmony, with which, some, out of sheer fastidiousness, desire everything that falls under their observation to be ended.

In conclusion, he ventures to express his hope, that the same indulgence, with which friendly critics have on former occasions honoured his productions, may so far be extended to those now presented to their no-

tice, as to absolve their author from the charge of having needlessly added to the heaps of lumber, which, under the designation, but wanting the essentials of poetry, have served greatly to prejudice the popular mind against the reception of such works of imagination, as truly possess a powerful claim upon its study and attention.



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PART FIRST.
ANGLING SONGS.



ANGLING SONGS.

SAY NOT OUR HANDS &c.

I.

SAY not our hands are cruel,
What deeds invite the blame?
Content our golden jewel,
No blemish on our name :
Creation's lords
We need no swords
To win a withering fame.

II.

Say not in gore and guile
We waste the livelong day :
Let those alone revile
Who feel our subtile sway,
When fancy-led
The sward we tread
And while the morn away.

III.

Oh! not in camp or court
Our best delights we find,
But in the far resort
With water, wood, and wind,
Where nature works
And beauty lurks
In all her craft enshrined.

IV.

There captive to her will,
Yet mid our fetters free,
We seek by singing rill
The broad and shady tree,
And lisp our lay
To flower and fay,
Or mock the limnet's glee.

V.

Thus glides the golden hour,
Until the chimes to toil
Recal from brook and bower ;
Then, laden with our spoil,
Slowly we part
With heavy heart
And leave the haunted soil.

THE BELL-THROATS O' &c.

I.

THE bell-throats o' the bonny birds ring,
When the angler goes a-trolling ;
The south wind waves his cheery wing,
And gentle rains are falling.

II.

The white thorn bears its bridal wreath,
When the angler goes a-trolling ;
And hark ! along the bloomy heath
The plaintive plover calling !

III.

Breezy and brown the rivers glide,
When the angler goes a-trolling ;
The dark burns leave the green hill side
Among the pebbles brawling.

IV.

Upon the meadow, by the springs,
The quiet herds are lolling ;
All earth is full of happy things
When the angler goes a-trolling !

THEY'VE STEEKIT &c.

I.

THEY'VE steekit the waters agen us, Jock,
 They've steekit the burnies an' a' ;
 We hae na a chiel to befrien' us, Jock,
 Our laird's aye makin' the law.

II.

We'll get neither yallow nor grey-fin, Jock,
 Nor bull-heid nor sawmon ava ;
 The laird he's aye at the savin', Jock,
 An' hauds to us weel wi' his law.

III.

Yer flees ye may set them a bleezin', Jock,
 Our wands they may gang to the wa' ;
 It's neither in rhyme nor in reason, Jock,
 To coort a kick-up wi' the law.

IV.

'That ilka intent should miscarry, Jock,
 I dinna wummer ava ;
 Our laird he's kin to the shirra, Jock,
 And sib wi' the loons o' the law.

v.

But faith ! ye'll agree it's a hardship, Jock,
To gie up our richts to the craw ;
The neist time we meet wi' his lairdship, Jock,
We promise him licks for his law.

vi.

An' c'en when the mirk is a-nearin', Jock,
Wi' pock-nets and drag-nets an' a',
We'll gie his bit ponds sic a clearin', Jock,
Our laird he'll look twice to the law.

vii.

We'll no spare a ged or a gudgeon, Jock,
We'll no spare a fin or a jaw ;
Lord pity the crazy eurmudgeon, Jock !
He'll sune tak his leave o' the law !

WATER OF ALDERS &c.

I.

WATER of Alders! where is the spell
That binds me in spirit to thee?
I cared not to drop my farewell,
For I left no loved things, in meadow or dell,
Thou wert but a stranger with me.

II.

Yet, in my fancy, often I turn
From the streams of my choice, all apart—
From the sylvan and blossomy burn
To the vale where thy waters murmur and mourn,
Their memory hangs on the heart!

III.

Often in vision tempt me again
Thy wild roving shoals; but I bend
O'er the silent shapes of the slain,
Not for me from the depths of the billowy main
The living thy channels ascend.

IV.

Swift as an arrow glancing below
Speeds the silver trout of the sea,
And ever on thy autumnal flow
The salmon laving his bosom of snow
Wends hill-ward, but not for me!

V.

Water of Alders! memory brings
Me back to each trodden fane,
And its silent recal of banished things
Unfeters Affection's buried springs
And bids them gush forth again!

WHEN HOMEWARD &c.

I.

WHEN homeward from the stream we turn
Good cheer our sport replaces,
There's liquor twinkling in the glass,
There's joy on all our faces!

II.

We drink sweet healths, a merry round,
We talk old stories over,
And sing glad staves, like summer birds
Below their leafy cover.

III.

Thus cheerily our evenings pass,
Till lulled below the quilting
We sleep our toils off, and are forth
Before the lark is liting.

IV.

All joy be with our hearts' kin bold!
May care's nets ne'er entangle,
Nor woe nor poverty depress
A brother of the angle!

WHEN THE MONTH &c.

I.

WHEN the month is happy June,
And her horns forsake the moon—
When she greets us round and full,
Then we'll haunt the Holy-well pool.
 Where I ween,
 Neath willow green,
Bright fins are ever gliding ;
'Mong the reeds
 And water-weeds,
They hold their wary hiding.

II.

Not by moonlight need we tread
Mossy bank or river bed ;
No living things 'neath moonlight prowl,
Save beetle and bat and solemn owl ;
 As she rides
 The old trout hides,
Under the still bank deeper ;
 Nor sweet fly
 Nor minnow sly
Can rouse the silent sleeper.

III.

Rather at morn-tide we shall go
To the Holy-well when the sun is low,
Ere the bee visits the new-burst flower
Or the noon breeze shakes the bower ;
 Then the trout
 Sails round about
Beyond the osier bushes,
 Or descries
 His winged prize
Among the whispering rushes.

IV.

Then we'll seek the Holy-well,
Or when eve glides up the dell,
And the cushat all unseen
Coos among the larch-wood green,
 Stealing soft
 Along the croft
We'll beat the shady water,
 Till to rest
 With arm opprest
Night turns us from the slaughter.

WELCOME SWEET &c.

I.

WELCOME, sweet southern showers !
Welcome, ye early flowers,
 Woo'd by the bee !
Ever gentle and bland
To all wights of the wand
 Welcome are ye !

II.

Oft at the wintry fire,
Nursing our hearts' desire
 Fondly we dream
Of joy in the breeze—
Singing birds on the trees—
 Flowers by the stream.

III.

Often our fancy brings
Pictures of sunny things
 Home to our hearth,
And we seem as we stray'd
Among sunshine and shade,
 Music and mirth.

IV.

Then with unconscious hand
 Grasp we the idle wand,
 Full of the boy,
 When to our sad surprise
 Swiftly the vision flies,
 Summer and joy !



SONNET.

THROUGH Luichart's lone expanse, dark Conan
 flows,
 Of moorland nature, as its tawny blood
 Betokens, and insensibly the flood
 Glides onward, while continuous hills enclose
 The quiet lake ; at length, this soft repose—
 The Syren bosom of the pastoral deeps
 It rudely spurns, and with terrific leaps
 Descends into the valley. Oft I chose
 In days by-gone the wild and wizard place,
 Wherein to roam, and from the eddy's rout,
 Lured with bewitching fly, the wary trout ;
 This scene hath Time's hand shifted, and its face
 'Reft of the life ; yet, picture-like, to me
 It hangs within the Mind's dark gallery.

THE TAKING OF THE SALMON.

I.

A BIRR! a whirr! a salmon's on,
A goodly fish! a thumper!
Bring up, bring up, the ready gaff,
And if we land him we shall quaff
Another glorious bumper!
Hark! 'tis the music of the reel,
The strong, the quick, the steady;
The line darts from the active wheel,
Have all things right and ready.

II.

A birr! a whirr! the salmon's out,
Far on the rushing river;
Onward he holds with sudden leap,
Or plunges through the whirlpool deep,
A desperate endeavour!
Hark to the music of the reel!
The fitful and the grating;
It pants along the breathless wheel,
Now hurried—now abating.

III.

A birr! a whirr! the salmon's off!—
No, no, we still have got him;
The wily fish is sullen grown,
And, like a bright imbedded stone,
Lies gleaming at the bottom.
Hark to the music of the reel!
'Tis hush'd, it hath forsaken;
With care we'll guard the magic wheel,
Until its notes awaken.

IV.

A birr! a whirr! the salmon's up,
Give line, give line and measure;
But now he turns! keep down ahead,
And lead him as a child is led,
And land him at your leisure.
Hark to the music of the reel!
'Tis welcome, it is glorious;
It wanders through the winding wheel,
Returning and victorious.

V.

A birr! a whirr! the salmon's in,
Upon the bank extended;
The princely fish is gasping slow,

His brilliant colours come and go,
All beautifully blended.
Hark to the music of the reel!
It murmurs and it closes ;
Silence is on the conquering wheel,
Its wearied line reposes.

VI.

No birr ! no whirr ! the salmon's ours,
The noble fish—the thumper :
Strike through his gill the ready gaff,
And bending homewards, we shall quaff
Another glorious bumper !
Hark to the music of the reel !
We listen with devotion ;
'There's something in that circling wheel
That wakes the heart's emotion !

SEEK YE WHAR &c.

I.

SEEK ye whar the burnie travels,
 Sullied wi' the simmer showers,
 Whar the fairy hauds his revels
 In the cleuch amang the flowers?
 Seek ye there, free o' care
 To dip the flowin' line,
 Wi' skilfu' hand to wave the wand
 An' dip the flowin' line!

II.

Or mayhap, whar glen desertin'
 Winds the river blue and braid;
 Noo some quiet meadow skirtin',
 Rinnin' noo anent the shade;
 Seek ye there, &c.

III.

Or amang the hills uncheery
 Whar the mirk mere slumbers lorn,
 An' his dirges lang and dreary
 Pipes the grey whaup to the morn.
 Seek ye there, &c.

IS THE CUCKOO &c.

I.

Is the cúckoo come? Is the cúckoo come?
Seek ye its happy voice
Bidding the hills rejoice,
Greeting green summer and sweet May
morn?
See you the bird,
Or hear its lov'd word
From dewy birch-wood or aged thorn?

II.

Is the cúckoo come? Is the cúckoo come?
Down by the reedy spring
Watching its wary wing
Wends the lone angler toward the lake,
Joy in his heart
With fancy alert,
He rears gentle visions wandering awake.

III.

Is the cúckoo come? Is the cúckoo come?
Lover of sunny streams!
Banish thy airy dreams,

Hark the wild note of the fairy-voiced bird !
Now in the glen,
And listen again,
O'er the wide hill floats the silvery word.

IV.

Is the cúckoo come? Is the cúckoo come?
Haste to thy loved resort,
Haste to thy pleasant sport,
Shake the sly palmer o'er streamlet and lake!
Hark on the wind—
Before thee—behind—
Plaintively singeth the bird of the brake!

O WAKEN, WINDS, WAKEN!

I.

O WAKEN, winds, waken! the waters are still,
And silence and sunlight recline on the hill;
The angler is watching beside the green springs
For the low welcome sound of your wandering
wings!

II.

His rod is unwielded, his tackle unfreed,
And the withe-woven pannier lies flung on the
mead;
He looks to the lake, through its fane of green
trees,
And sighs for the curl of the cool summer breeze.

III.

Calm-bound is the form of the water-bird fair,
And the spear of the rush stands erect in the air,
And the dragon-fly roams o'er the lily-bed gay,
Where basks the bold pike in a sun-smitten bay.

IV.

O waken, winds, waken ! wherever asleep,
 On cloud or dark mountain, or down in the deep ;
 The angler is watching, beside the green springs,
 For the low welcome sound of your wandering
 wings.



SONNET.

THE fellow-anglers of my youthful days,
 (Of past realities we form our dream,)
 I watch them re-assembling by the stream,
 And on the group with solemn musings gaze ;
 For some are lost in life's bewildering haze,
 And some have left their sport and tak'n to toil,
 And some have faced the Ocean's wild turmoil,
 And some—a very few—their olden ways
 By shining lake and river still pursue ;
 Ah ! *one* I gaze on 'mid the fancied band,
 Unlike the rest in years, in gait, in hue—
 Uprisen from a dim and shadowy land—
 Ask what loved phantom fixes my regard !
 Yarrow's late pride, the Angler, Shepherd, Bard !

THRO' SUN BRIGHT LAKES.

I.

THROUGH sun-bright lakes,
Round islets gay,
The river takes
Its western way,
And the water-chime
Soft zephyrs time
Each gladsome summer day.

II.

The starry trout,
Fair to behold,
Roameth about
On fin of gold ;
At root of tree
His haunt you may see,
Rude rock or crevice old.

III.

And hither dart
The salmon grey,
From the deep heart
Of some sea bay ;
And herling wild
Is here beguiled
To hold autumnal play.

IV.

Oh ! 'tis a stream
Most fair to see,
As in a dream
Flows pleasantly ;
And our hearts are woo'd
To a kind sweet mood
By its wondrous witchery.

TROLLING SONG.

I.

LET us go a trolling, boys!
A trolling we shall go,
While the showers are falling, boys,
And while the south winds blow;
Where the trout
Prowl about,
Steadily, steadily, let us row.

II.

See! the waves are dancing, boys,
Around the mermaid isle;
Many a fin is glancing, boys,
Oh! weary runs the while,
Till we speed,
All agreed
To troll, to troll the glittering guile.

III.

O'er the surface ranging, boys,
We'll beat from bay to bay,
Lure and water changing, boys ;
It is the angler's way ;
So we'll troll
One and all
And cheerily, cheerily pass the day.

IV.

And again returning, boys,
We'll talk our triumphs o'er,
Tongue and bosom burning, boys,
As they have burned before,
While we told
Feats of old,
We never, we never can equal more !

THE SEA-TROUT GREY.

I.

THE sea-trout grey
Are now at play,
The salmon is up, hurra ! hurra !
For the streamlets brown
Are dancing down,
So quicken the cup, hurra ! hurra !

II.

The cloud-cap still
Is on the hill,
And the showers fall fast, hurra ! hurra !
But the sun and breeze
Will scatter these,
So drink while they last, hurra ! hurra !

III.

We'll start by dawn
O'er lea and lawn,
Through thicket and thorn, hurra ! hurra !
On merriest limb
With rods in trim,
Come drink a sweet morn, hurra ! hurra !

I'VE ANGLED FAR &c.

I.

I'VE angled far and angled wide,
On Fannich drear, by Luichart's side,
 Across dark Conan's current ;
Have haunted Beauly's silver stream,
Where glimmering thro' the forest Dream
 Hangs its eternal torrent ;

II.

Among the rocks of wild Maree,
O'er whose blue billow ever free
 The daring eagles hover,
And where, at Glomach's ruffian steep,
The dark stream holds its angered leap,
 Many a fathom over ;

III.

By Lochy sad, and Laggan lake,
Where Spey uncoils his glittering snake
 Among the hills of thunder ;
And I have swept my fatal fly,
Where swarthy Findhorn hurries by
 The olden forest under :

IV.

On Tummel's solitary bed,
And where wild Tilt and Garry wed
 In Athol's heathery valleys,
On Earn by green Duncraig's bower,
Below Breadalbane's Tay-washed tower,
 And Scone's once regal palace.

V.

There have I swept the slender line,
And where the broad Awe braves the brine,
 Have watched the grey grilse gambol,
By nameless stream and tarn remote,
With light flies in the breeze afloat,
 Holding my careless ramble.

VI.

But dearer than all these to me
Is sylvan Tweed; each tower and tree
 That in its vale rejoices!
Dearer the streamlets one and all,
That blend with its Eolian brawl
 Their own enamouring voices!

DRINKING SONG.

I.

WHILE others are brawling let anglers agree,
And in concord the goblet replenish ;
Should contention prevail, then away on the gale
All mirth and hilarity vanish.

II.

No strife we'll allow, no clamorous words
To sever the friendships of summer,
But hand within hand, in amity stand,
And consign every wrong to the rummer.

III.

Oh! Peace and Content are the angler's best wealth,
No journey without them he ventures ;
Like angels they wait at the porch of his gate,
And greet him again when he enters.

IV.

Then joyously mingle the soul of the grain
With a merry supply from the tankard !
'Twill cost not a care, as long as we share
The cups of content and of concord !

THE YELLOW FINS O' YARROW.

I.

THE yallow fins o' Yarrow dale!
I kenna whar they've gane tae;
Were ever troots in border vale
Sae comely or sae dainty?

II.

They had baith gowd and spanglit rings,
Wi' walth o' pearl amang them;
An' for sweet luvè o' the bonny things,
The heart was laith to wrang them.

III.

But he that angles Yarrow ower,
(Maun changes ever waken?)
Frae our Lady's loch to Newark Tower,
Will find the stream forsaken.

IV.

Forsaken ilka bank an' stane
O' a' its troots o' splendour;
Auld Yarrow's left sae lorn and lane,
Ane scarcely wad hae kenn'd her.

v.

Waes me ! the auncient yellow fin
 I marvel whar he's gane tae ;
 Was ever troot in Forest rin
 Sae comely or sae dainty !



A PICTURE.

WE listen by the waters blue to voices that we
 love ;
 Sweet flowers are twinkling at our side, and willow
 leaves above ;
 Before us feeds the fearless trout, emerging from
 the calm,
 And bleats behind, the fleecy ewe upon its wan-
 dering lamb.

Delicious musings fill the heart, and images of bliss ;
 Ah ! that all pictures of the past were innocent
 as this,—
 That life were like a summer trance beneath a
 willow wide,
 Or the ramble of an angler lone along the river
 side.

GIE ME MY GAUD &c.

I.

GIE me my gaud, my guid auld gaud—
The wan' I loe sae rarely ;
But faith, guidwife, it's unco thraw'd,
Ye hae na used it fairly.

II.

The bairns ! plague tak the thievin' things !
They play the verra deevil ;
Wha'd think they've hashed my lav'rock wings,
An' ta'en my mennin sweevil ?

III.

They've made sair wark amang the flees,
There's neither huik nor hackle ;
What's a' the guid o' brew or breeze
An' no ane skein o' tackle ?

IV.

But, hinny, whar's my muckle reel ?
Gie up yer cloots and needle—
I wadna lose my honest wheel
For a' the wives in Tweeddale.

V.

No to the fore! I micht hae guess'd
Some ill or ither cam o't;
It's gane the gate o' a' the rest,
An' nane to bear the blame o't.

VI.

Aweel! aweel! mishaps we ken
Are coupled aye thegither;
But, guidwife, rax us yonner hen,
She's dainty in the feather.

VII.

A mawkin lug and tinsey braw,
Ben in the kist ye'll find them,
Auld reel and tippets—airns an' a'—
The airns, be shure an' mind them!

VIII.

It gangs awee agen the grain
To bear sae mony troubles;
An' yet, guidwife, to ilka ane
There's graith among the stubbles.

IX.

It's neither dole nor deep lament
Will mend a body's grievance ;
Sae e'en we'll haud oursels content
Wi' thae wee bits o' leevins ;

X.

An' gin a sawmon soom the Tweed
(The thing's no that unchancy)
We'll gar the ilka tooth o't bleed,
May fortune fa' the fancy !

BLESS WITH ME &c.

I.

BLESS with me the spring tide bland
All ye anglers of the valley!
Wave aloof the slender wand,
And around the oak-tree rally.

II.

Bless the birds, that all along
Send us such a cheerful greeting;
To their measures of kind song
Joyously our hearts are beating.

III.

Fleeted now the winter snow
From the forehead of the mountains,
And the wild sweet waters flow
Freshly through their several fountains.

IV.

In the secret of the sod,
Moss and primrose lie together;
But the wild bee shoots abroad,
Fonder of the April heather.

v.

Fresh and free the breezes blow,
And the amber stream runs gaily ;
Forth, and warble as ye go,
All ye anglers of the valley !

SONNET.

THOMSON ! this quiet stream the song of thought
Oft in thy bosom reared, and as I steal
Along its banks, they to my gaze reveal
The pictures by thy truthful pencil wrought ;
No rash intruder on the rural spot
I seem, but in that glowing fervour share,
Which on their page thy far-fam'd Seasons bear ;
Nor honoured less is Nature, nor less sought
Her still retreats, while with my wand I fling
O'er Eden's pools the well-dissembling fly,
Creating in the Mind's fantastic eye
Castles of Indolence. The sudden spring
Of a huge trout assails their air-built walls,
And to the untrench'd earth each hollow fabric falls.

WHEN THE STREAMS RISE &c.

I.

WHEN the streams rise,
When the wind flies,
With hope and delight we grow dizzy,
And all a-near
Airy words hear
Be busy, sweet angler, be busy.

II.

Then we prepare
Tackle and hair,
And levy fair minnows full plenty,
Or armed with hoe
A-gathering go
Of brandlings and dew-feeders dainty.

II.

Then from the spring
Mosses we bring
To store our fresh baits before starting,
Young and unshorn,
Green in the horn,
Culled when the clouds are departing.

IV.

Thus duly stored
Cunning or froward
No fish can say nay to our tackle,
While each we ply,
Worm, penk and fly,
Grey palmer or liveried hackle.

V.

Heigh for a wind
Gushing behind!
Heigh for a cloud dark and showery!
Foamy and freed,
Let the stream speed
Under the willow-bough flowery.

VI.

So may we start,
Joyous in heart
With hope and felicity dizzy,
And still a-near
Airy words hear
Be busy, sweet angler, be busy!

SONG.

I.

BRING the rod, the line, the reel!
Bring, oh bring the osier creel!
Bring me flies of fifty kinds,
Bring me showers, and clouds, and winds.
All things right and tight,
All things well and proper,
Trailer red and bright,
Dark and wily dropper—
Casts of midges bring,
Made of plover hackle,
With a gaudy wing,
And a cobweb tackle.

II.

Lead me where the river flows,
Show me where the alder grows,
Reeds and rushes, moss and mead,
To them lead me—quickly lead,
Where the roving trout
Watches round an eddy,
With his eager snout
Pointed up and ready.

Till a careless fly
On the surface wheeling,
Tempts him rising sly
From his safe concealing.

III.

There, as with a pleasant friend,
I the happy hours will spend
Urging on the subtle hook,
O'er the dark and chancy nook,
With a hand expert
Every motion swaying,
And on the alert
When the trout are playing ;
Bring me rod and reel,
Flies of every feather,
Bring the osier creel—
Send me glorious weather !

AWA WI' YER TINSEY &c.

I.

AWA wi' yer tinsey sae braw !
 Our troots winna thole it ava,
 They've grown sae capricious,
 Sonsie and vicious—
 As weel may ye fish wi' a craw.

II.

The wits o' an eel I'll uphaud
 Agen baith the gowk and his gaud,
 Wha bounces and blethers
 O' fancies and feathers,
 Till the lugs o' the lieges are staw'd.

III.

Wee dour-lookin' huiks are the thing,
 Moose body an' laverock wing;
 There's mony a chiel ta'en ane
 Wi' mauk or wi' mennin,
 But the flee answers best in the spring.

THE ANGLER'S TRYSTING TREE.

I.

SING, sweet thrushes, forth and sing !

Meet the morn upon the lea ;

Are the emeralds of spring

On the angler's trysting-tree ?

Tell, sweet thrushes, tell to me,

Are there buds on our willow tree ?

Buds and birds on the trysting tree ?

II.

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing !

Have you met the honey bee,

Circling upon rapid wing

Round the angler's trysting tree ?

Up sweet thrushes, up and see ;

Are there bees at our willow tree ?

Birds and bees at the trysting tree ?

III.

Sing, sweet thrushes, forth and sing !
Are the fountains gushing free ?
Is the south wind wandering
Through the angler's trysting tree ?
Up, sweet thrushes, tell to me,
Is the wind at our willow tree ?
Wind or calm at the trysting tree ?

IV.

Sing, sweet thrushes, up and sing !
Wile us with a merry glee,
To the flowery haunts of spring—
To the angler's trysting tree.
Tell sweet thrushes, tell to me,
Are there flowers 'neath our willow tree ?
Spring and flowers at the trysting tree ?

FAST, FAST &c.

I.

FAST ! fast ! we have him fast,
A prime one by the gleam !
In the old Laird's shadowy cast
Above the Elshie stream ;
'Tis a salmon plump and strong,
Newly run from the distant brine,
Newly run, newly run,—a right thundering one !
Tell him line.

II.

Away, he darts away,
Across the shining Tweed,
Nor art nor arm can stay
The noble creature's speed ;
From our reel the swift line spins,
As he feels the galling scar,
And in vain, all in vain, shakes his lengthening chain
From afar.

III.

To shore, slow draw to shore ;
The light boat edges in,
While moves the cautious oar,
Like some sea-prowler's fin
In the creeks of an Indian isle ;
Now the flowery bank we've gained,
And in hand, firm in hand, with our labouring wand
Hold him chained.

IV.

See, see, in wild despair,
He seeks by fatal spring
To break the magic hair—
To fly the madd'ning string ;
In vain, all in vain, his headlong plunge!
For the fatal die is cast ;
O'er his eyelid soon, death's glimmering swoon
Gathers fast.

V.

With quick revolving hand
The good line home we wind,
While obedient to our wand
The worn fish floats behind,

And the bright pebbled edge, as he nears,
With our gaff-hook we check his retreat,
And see, here he lies, a weltering prize
At our feet !

SONNET.

“ ANGLERS ! ye are a heartless bloody race,”
'Tis thus, the half-soul'd sentimentalist
Presumes to apostrophise us to the face ;
Weak, paltry, miserable antagonist !
To deem by this compassionate grimace
He doth sweet service to humanity,
And yet when of his fellows' misery,—
Of wars, of pestilence, and the woes that chase
Mankind to the interminable shore
He hears, to treat them with a hasty sneer,
Nor let their shrill appeal disturb a tear
Or one emotion waken in his core !
It is too much ! Anglers, your cruelty
Is tend'rer than this man's philanthropy.

A JOLLY CRAFT &c.

I.

A JOLLY craft have we, hurra !
The brethren of the streams !
In joy we pass the welcome day,
And close it under dreams.
We wander by the river side
And by the gentle rill !
They roll along the valley wide—
They gambol on the hill.

II.

It is a manly one and free,
This pleasant sport of ours ;
Above us is the shady tree
And under us the flowers ;
And in our hand the pliant rod
Is waving to and fro—
The salmon lies upon the sod,
Glittering like the snow.

III.

We love the angler's quiet lot,
His meditative art ;
The fancies in his hour of thought
That blossom from his heart.
All other things we'll cast behind,
Let busy toil alone,
And flinging care unto the wind,
We'll angle, angle on.

YE WARDERS OF THE WATERS.

I.

YE warders of the waters !
Is the alder'd stream-side free ?
Hath the salmon sped
From his winter bed
Adown to the azure sea ?
Rideth afloat
The fisher's boat
Below the white-thorn tree ?

II.

Go forth, ye anglers jovial !
The waters are open wide ;
No longer we ward
From vernal sward
The glittering salmon glide ;
Free at your will
The crystal rill,
And tuneless torrent-side.

III.

Ho ! warders of the waters !
Is the yellow trout at feed ?
And the March flies brown
Are they sailing down
Where current and zephyr lead ?
See you abroad
With pliant rod
Some gentle brother speed ?

IV.

Go forth, ye anglers, jovial !
The ring of the trout we spy,
And the south winds pour
In a pleasant shower
The merry March-brown fly ;
With vigorous wand
The fisher band
Among the dark pools ply.

OH! WHO THAT FEELS &c.

I.

OH! who that feels the joyous throb, which the
angler's bosom stirreth
 To the flowery stream-side hieing,
 When vernal winds are flying,
Would envy all that fortune with her fickle hand
conferreth.

II.

Nor in cities, nor with courtiers, nor within the
kingly palace,
 So flowing in its measure
 Is the rife cup of our pleasure,
As when with wand and pannier we tread the
daisied valleys.

III.

Would we give the grey lark's carol for the cold
lip-uttered chorus,
 Or heaven's ample covering,
 Where the minstrel bird is hovering
For the lamp-lit roofs that elevate their glimmer-
ing arches o'er us?

IV.

Would we give our wild free rambles for the revel-
ler's heated prison ?

Or with the false and fawning

Consume a summer's dawning,

Rather than greet the joyful sun from his couch
of clouds arisen ?

V.

Would we give our water-sceptre for the staves of
state and splendour,

Or exchange the angler's calling

On the shady river trolling,

For all the lesser pleasaunces that pomp or power
can tender ?

VI.

Though bewitching are the hues that warp the
world's every folly,

No longer they invite us,

While truer joys delight us

By the stream-side, as we roam, below the haw-
thorn and the holly.

LET ITHER ANGLERS &c.

I.

LET ithers anglers chuse their ain,
An' ithers waters tak' the lead
O' Hielan' streams we covet nane,
But gie to us the bonnie Tweed!
An' gie to us the cheerfu' burn
That steals into its valley fair—
The streamlets that at ilka turn,
Sae saftly meet an' mingle there.

II.

The lanesome Tala and the Lyne,
An' Manor wi' its mountain rills,
An' Etterick, whose waters twine
Wi' Yarrow frae the forest hills;
An' Gala, too, an' Teviot bright,
An' mony a stream o' playfu' speed:
Their kindred valleys a' unite
Among the braes o' bonnie Tweed.

III.

There's no a hole abune the Crook,
Nor stane nor gentle swirl aneath,
Nor drumlie rill nor faery brook,
That daunders thro' the flowery heath,
But ye may fin' a subtle troot,
A' gleamin' ower wi' starn an' bead,
An' mony a sawmon sooms aboot,
Below the bielts o' bonnie Tweed.

IV.

Frae Holylee to Clovenford,
A chancier bit ye canna hae,
So gin ye tak' an angler's word,
Ye'd through the whuns an' ower the brae,
An' work awa wi' cunnin' hand
Yer birzy hackles black and reid;
The saft sough o' a slender wand
Is meetest music for the Tweed!
O! the Tweed! the bonnie Tweed,
O' rivers it's the best,
Angle here, or angle there,
Troots are soomin' ilka where,
Angle east or west.

THE BREEZE IS ON &c.

I.

THE breeze is on the Heron lake,
The May-sun shineth clear ;
Away we bound through the broomy brake,
With our wands and angling gear.

II.

The birch-wreath o'er the water edge
Scatters sweet flies about,
And round his haunt of sighing sedge
Bells up the yellow trout.

III.

Beware ! beware ! his eye is bright,
As falcon's in the sky ;
But artful feather hove aright,
Will hood a keener eye.

IV.

Beware ! beware the water weed
And the birch that waves behind,
And gently let the good line speed
Before thee, on the wind.

v.

Oh! gently let the good line flow,
And gently wile it home ;
There's many a gallant fin, I trow,
Under the ribbed foam.

vi.

A merry fish on a stallion hair
'Tis a pleasant thing to lead
On May-days, when the cowslip fair
Is blooming on the mead.

vii.

When the breeze is up, and the sun is out,
And grey flies two or three
Sport in the noontide, round about
The shadow of a tree.

viii.

O! then the heart bounds pleasantly,
And its thoughts are pleasant things,
Gushing in joyous purity,
Like silent water-springs!

THE ANGLER'S INVITE.

I.

COME when the leaf comes, angle with me,
Come when the bee hums over the lea,
 Come with the wild flowers—
 Come with the mild showers—
Come when the singing bird calleth for thee!

II.

Then to the stream side, gladly we'll hie,
Where the grey trout glide silently by,
 Or in some still place
 Over the hill face
Hurrying onward, drop the light fly.

III.

Then, when the dew falls, homeward we'll speed
To our own loved walls down on the mead,
 There, by the bright hearth,
 Holding our night mirth,
We'll drink to sweet friendship in need and in
deed.

I SIT BY THE RIVER &c.

I.

I sit by the river and weep a farewell ;
My musings have turned to regrets,
While I gaze on the tranquil stream leaving the dell
And the fisherman shooting his nets.

II.

Then rush to the memory summers of joy,
And the shadowy sands of the past
Discover the wandering tracks of the boy
Uninjured by billow or blast.

III.

Ah ! each feat and each frolic, the pastimes of old,
They seem as if left for me yet,
While afar on the indolent pool I behold
The fisherman shooting his net.

IV.

But see ! 'tis the silvery salmon that springs
In mockery under the shade,
Below me the dark trout is rearing its rings,
Unfettered and unafraid.

v.

Why grasp at the wand? what matters it now
That they range un-alarmed to my feet?
And alway, as the summer fly drops from the bough
Their wandering circles repeat?

vi.

Despoiled of the sorrowless scenes of my youth,
I may toil my past loves to forget,
But Mem'ry will keep, 'mid her portraits of truth,
The fisherman shooting his net.

WHERE TORRENTS FOAM &c.

I.

WHERE torrents foam,
While others roam
Among the yielding heather,
Some river meek
We'll forth and seek
And lay our lines together.

II.

Some sylvan stream,
Where shade and gleam
Are blended with each other ;
Below whose bank
The lilies lank
All humbler flowers ensmother.

III.

Where cushats coo
And ring-doves woo
The shining channel over,
From leafy larch
Or birchen arch—
Their unmolested cover.

IV.

There daily met,
No dark regret
Shall cloud our noon of pleasure ;
We'll carry rule
O'er stream and pool
And none to claim a measure !

V.

With tackles rare
On chosen hair,
March fly and minnow tender,
We shall invite
The scaly wight
To eye them and surrender.

VI.

And when out-worn,
We'll seek some thorn
With shadow old and ample,—
The natural ground
Moss-laid around,
An angler's resting temple !

TO THE TWEED.

I.

TWINED with my boyhood, wreathed on the dream
Of early endearments, beautiful stream !
The lisp of thy waters is music to me,
Hours buried, are buried in thee !

II.

Sleepless and sinless, the mirth of thy springs !
The light, and the limpid—the fanciful things,
That mingle with thine the gleam of their play,
And are lifted in quiet away !

III.

River ! that toyst under the trees,
And lurest the leaf from the wandering breeze,
It glides over thee, like the gift of the young,
When he rock'd at the bough where it hung.

IV.

The voice of the city, the whisper of men,
I hear them, and hate them, and weary again
For the lull of the streams—the breath of the brae,
Brought down in a morning of May.

V.

Go! hushed o'er thy channels, the shadow'd, the
dim,
Give wail for the Stricken and worship to him,
That woke the old feats of the outlaw'd and free—
The legends, that skirted on thee.

VI.

Broken the shell; but its lingering tone
Lives for the stream of his fathers—his own;
And the pale wizard hand, that hath gleaned out
of eld,
Is again on thy bosom beheld.

VII.

He hears not, but pilgrims that muse at his urn,
At the wailing of waters all tearfully turn,
And mingle their mourning, their worship in thine,
And gather the dews from his shrine.

VIII.

Tweed! winding and wild! where the heart is
unbound,
They know not, they dream not, who linger around,
How the sadden'd will smile, and the wasted re-win
From thee—the bliss withered within.

IX.

And I, when to breathe is a burden, and joy
Forgets me, and life is no longer the boy,
On the labouring staff, and the tremorous knee,
 Will wander, bright river, to thee!

X.

Thoughts will come back that were with me
 before!
Loves of my childhood left in the core,
That were hushed, but not buried—the treasured
 —the true,
 In memory waken anew.

XI.

And the hymn of the furze, when the dew-pearls
 are shed,
And the old sacred tones of thy musical bed,
Will close, as the last mortal moments depart,
 The golden gates of the heart!

GAILY ROCK &c.

I.

GAILY rock the lily beds
On the marge of Lomond lake ;
There the lonely angler treads
Nature round him—all awake,
Heathy mountain
And sweet fountain
Stealing through the ferny brake.

II.

Swiftly from the water edge
Shoots the fierce pike wing'd with fear,
To its lair among the sedge,
As the angler wanders near,
All elated,
Primely baited,
Seeking solitary cheer.

III.

Throbs aloud the eager heart
And the hand in tremour moves,
When some sly fish all alert
Round his tempting tackle roves,
Boldly daring,
Or bewareing,
While the gléamy lure it proves.

IV.

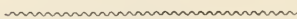
Then at length, each doubt subdued,
Turns the lake-shark on his prey ;
Quickly gorged the fatal food,
Suddenly he darts away,
All ensnackled,
Trimly tackled,
Out into the deep'ning bay.

V.

But with steady caution schooled,
Soon his wonted vigour fails,
By the angler's sceptre ruled
Maimed the sullen pirate sails,
Shoreward wending,
Uncontending,
Him the joyous captor hails.

VI.

And along the margin hauled,
 All his fretful fins aspread,
 Tho' by subtle iron galled,
 Still he rears his gasping head,
 Uncomplaining,
 Fear disdaining—
 See him as a trophy led!



SONNET.

OF all sweet waters and soul-stirring spots,
 Remote from the contentions of mankind,
 Oftest repictured by my musing thoughts,
 Lies a bright lake among fair trees enshrined,
 Eclipt Loch Achilty. A heath-grown crest
 Surnamed the Tor its eastern guardian seems,
 While wild Craig Darroch rears its hill of dreams
 Emprisoning the clear wave on the west.
 Bright mimic bays with weeping birches fringed—
 An islet ruin—solitary deer—
 And distant mountains by the sun-ray tinged
 At the Mind's animating beck appear,
 Nor un-remembered in the wizard scene,
 Against a moss-grown stone, entranc'd two anglers
 lean.

BELOW A SHADY &c.

I.

BELOW a shady hazel tree
An angler trimmed his flies,
Singing, hey derry! trout that are merry
No longer, no longer are wise.

II.

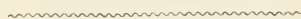
Of dapper make and ruddy hue
'Twas a jolly blade I ween,
With his hey derry, fresh from the ferry
Over the meadow so green.

III.

Right gladsomely he eyed the stream,
And shook his wand anon,
With a hey derry! brown as a berry
The winding waters run.

IV.

Oh ! well I wot that jovial blade
 Is one of our gentle band,
 With his hey derry, trout that are merry
 Swim to the angler's hand.
 Derry, hey derry !
 Trout that are merry,
 Swim to the angler's hand !



SONNET.

A METEOR-bearing bark before me made
 For Tweed's wide current from a wooded bay,
 And under midnight's cover, on its way
 Cautiously glided. In its moving shade,
 On either side the oar's infrequent blade
 Dipped flagging, like the heron's wing—pursued
 At every touch by fiery snakes, that play'd
 Around the vessel's track. A figure stood
 Upon the prow with tall and threat'ning spear,
 Which suddenly into the stream he smote.
 Methought of Charon and his gloomy boat—
 Of the torch'd Furies and of Pluto drear
 Burning the Stygian tide for lamprey vile,
 That on his bride's dimm'd face, Hell might be-
 hold a smile.

THE STREAMS OF OLD SCOTLAND.

I.

THE streams of old Scotland for me !
The joyous the wilful, the wild,
The waters of song and of glee,
That ramble away to the sea
With the step and the mirth of a child !

II.

The valleys of England are wide ;
Her rivers rejoice every one,
In grace and in beauty they glide,
And water flowers float at their side,
As they gleam in the rays of the sun.

III.

But where are the speed and the spray—
The dark lakes that welter them forth—
Tree and heath nodding over their way—
The rock and the precipice grey,
That bind the wild streams of the north ?

IV.

Hath the salmon a dormant home
In track of the barbel or bream ?
Or holds he his fastness of foam,
Where the wraiths of the dark tempest roam
At the break of a wandering stream ?

V.

Even there you will find him, among
The glens of old Scotland afar,
And up through her valleys of song,
He silently glances along
In corselet of silver and star.

VI.

The rivers of Scotland for me !
They water the soil of my birth,
They gush from the hills of the free
And sing, as they seek the wild sea,
With a hundred sweet voices of mirth !

MY AIN WEE FISHER BOY.

I.

I LO'E my ain wee fisher boy,
He's bold an' bonny—bonny an' bold,
An' aye there is a glint o' joy
A-lyin' mang his locks o' gold.

II.

His gaud is o' the rowan rare ;
It's braw an' bonny—bonny an' braw ;
His creel is o' the saugh sae fair
That flowers below the castil wa'.

III.

I lo'e him for his sunny e'e,
Sae blue an' sunny—sunny an' blue ;
There's glitterin' starns 'neath mony a bree
But nane sae tender or sae true.

IV.

I lo'e him for his gentle airt,
Wi' line an' angle—angle an' line,
He's captive ta'en my silly heart,
This bonny fisher boy o' mine !

GOOD CHEER! BROTHER ANGLER.

I.

Good cheer! brother angler, say,
Is the swift salmon abroad to-day?
Have you noted the flash of his silv'ry mail,
Or the proud free curl of his glitt'ring tail?
Hath he sprung at the winsome fly,
 Smitten by the treacherous feather,
 Heedless of the steel and tether
And of human subtlety?

II.

Alas! brother angler, nay!
Salmon none have I stirred to-day—
Feint, frolic nor dart have I beheld
But round me the wily dark trout bell'd;
One in greed and one in scorn,
 And a third one out of pleasure
 Sprang at my fly. See all the treasure
Ta'en by me this livelong morn!

III.

Ply on, brother angler ! hark !
The grey wind warbles across the park ;
It ruffles the water from bank to bank,
And shakes the green covert of rushes lank.
See how it paces round and round,
 Wild of foot—with step unsteady,
 Dancing on the amorous eddy
To a low, uncertain sound !

IV.

Ply on, brother angler ! deep
Under the rapids the bright fins sweep,
And the salmon holdeth his secret track
O'er ledges of rock, through fissure black.
O ! most hath an angler need
 Of sweet patience and of plodding ;
 For the good wand ever nodding
Better than cunning bringeth speed !

A LOCH SCENE.

I.

A MOUNTAIN shadow lieth on
Its mirror dark and massy ;
The red late sun-ray streams across
O'er solemn wood and quiet moss,
O'er sward and hillock grassy.

II.

It tinges with a crimson light
The water sleeping under ;
That calm clear water seldom wakes—
Calm when the forest pine tree quakes—
Calm 'mid the very thunder.

III.

A ruin on its islet stands,
The walls with ivy pendent ;
Its grey stones crumbling underneath
Peer through the arbitrary wreath
Of that untrain'd ascendant.

IV.

But glancing from the record rude
Of the remoter ages,
Behold the image of a stag
Timorous of the water flag
Its eager thirst assuages !

V.

The stately antlers branching free
Above its forehead tragic—
The form of animated grace
Are kindred to the quiet place,
A portion of its magic !

VI.

And there the wild duck, like a skiff,
Shoots from the reeds horrescent ;
Its yellow paddles in their wake
Leave on the solitary lake
The traces of a crescent.

VII.

The peerly water-heron, too,
Where the faint sun-ray trembles,
Drooping its ever graceful head
Above the floating lily-bed,
A poet-bird resembles.

VIII.

And yonder, on the distant marge,
Behold an angler eager,
With taper wand and arm of skill
Under the shadow of a hill—
A solitary figure.

IX.

But falling from the quiet air
The mist and shades together,
Glideth away the sad sweet show,
The mountain and the lake below—
The forest and the heather †

X.

And night with dewy forehead bent
Holdeth her vigil solemn,
Till the red architect of morn
Upon a cloud-car slowly borne
Erects his amber column.

OWER AT THE CAULD-FOOT.

I.

OWER at the cauld-foot
There bides an auld troot,
No mony there be that are wiser ;
It baffles a' skill
To tether his gill
An' gie the sly boy a surpriser.

II.

He's thick an' he's braid
Wi' sprecks like a taed
An' spangles o' ilka dimension,
Mirk spangles an' reid
Frae his waem to his heid,
In number ayont comprehension.

III.

Sic a swasher I ween
Is rare to be seen,
An' no to be grippit wi' thinkin' ;
It gars ilka chiel
Lay his loof on his reel
An' sets e'en the wisest a-blinkin'.

IV.

Auld Purdie cam' doon
 Ane braw afternoon,
 (Ilk angler taks choice o' his weather,)
 Quoth he, " I'll soon bring
 The knave to the spring
 An' teach him the taste o' a feather."

V.

Sae e'en he set till't,
 Like ane muckle skill't,
 But faith, let the braggin' come last o't;
 Frae the mirk till the dawin',
 In spite o' his crawin',
 He ne'er could mak oot the richt cast o't.

VI.

There was Foster an' Kerse
 An' a chiel frae the Merse
 Wad set a' the water a seethin';
 Watty Grieve an' Jock Hay
 Cam ower the way
 Wi' Scougal o' fair Innerleithen.

VII.

The mair were the han's,
 The rifer the wan's,
 Our king o' the cauld got the braver
 He bobbit about
 Wi' his wonnerfu' snoot
 An' cock't up his tail oot o' favour.

VIII.

But fling as they nicht,
 To the left or the richt,
 Wi' mennin, mawk, lob, leech or rawin ;
 No a rug wad he gie,
 For weel ettled he
 O' the gear whilk the wind was a-blawin'.

IX.

Come anglers, come a',
 Baith meikle an' sma',
 Tak yer chance o' the cunnin' auld reiver ;
 For aught that ye ken,
 Mither Fortune may len'
 Gude speed to yer wan's an' ye deive her.

THE ANGLER'S GRAVE.

I.

SORROW, sorrow, bring it green !

True tears make the grass to grow
And the grief of the good, I ween,
Is grateful to him that sleeps below.
Strew sweet flowers, free of blight—
Blossoms gathered in the dew :
Should they wither before night,
Flowers and blossoms bring anew.

II.

Sorrow, sorrow, speed away
To our angler's quiet mound,
With the old pilgrim, twilight grey,
Enter thou on the holy ground ;
There he sleeps, whose heart was twined
With wild stream and wandering burn,
Woer of the western wind !
Watcher of the April morn !

Sorrow at the poor man's hearth !
Sorrow in the hall of pride !
Honour waits at the grave of worth
And high and low stand side by side.
Brother angler ! slumber on,
Haply thou shalt wave the wand,
When the tide of time is gone,
In some far and happy land.

DRINKING SONG.

I.

DEATH, death to the bald-heads—no quarter !
The rogues they shall taste of our steel ;
We'll give each a turn of the torture
And lay him agape in the creel.

II.

Drink death to the bald-heads ! why spare them ?
What matters it when they expire ?
To say nay to our wishes we dare them,
So re-strengthen the goblet still higher !

III.

Our wands to good fortune they guide us,
Meanwhile, bear the cup to the mouth ;
Let the break of grey twilight decide us
And winds wand'ring soft from the south.

IV.

We anglers should quaff and be jolly,
Ere the time to be doing draws nigh ;
Short season will sleep away folly,
And we'll up with the sun, by and by.

V.

Drink death to the bald-heads—no quarter !
Why spare the sly rogues of the brook ?
We'll give each a turn of the torture,
Drink success to the wand and the hook !

THE FAIRY ANGLER.

I.

'Twas a bland summer's eve, when the forest I trod;
The dew-gems were starring the flowers of the sod,
And 'faire mistress moone,' as she rose from the sea
Shed apart the green leaves of each shadowy tree.

II.

I passed by a brook, where her silvers lay flung,
Among knolls of wild fern it witchingly sung,
While a lone fairy angler with glimmering hand
From the odorous banks waved her delicate wand.

III.

In silence I watched, as with eager intent
O'er the moon-silvered water she gracefully bent,
And plied with green rush-rod, new torn from its bed,
Her line of the thorn-spider's mystical thread.

IV.

A pannier of moss-leaves her shoulders bedecked,
The nest of some bird, which the night winds had
wrecked,
Slung round with a tendril of ivy so gay,
And a belt of stream flowers bound her woodland
array.

V.

No snow-flake e'er dropt from its cloud on the brook
So gently impelled as her moth-plumaged hook ;
The pearl-sided parlet and minnow obeyed
The magical beck of that wandering maid.

VI.

And aye as her rush-rod she waved o'er the rill,
Sweet words floated round her, I treasure them still,
Tho' like a bright moon-cloud resolved into air,
Passed from me, regretted, the vision so faire.

FAIRY'S SONG.

I.

No zephyr shakes the leafy, leafy tree ;
The round merry moon looks in on me,
Through the grene-wood cover,
Where all summer-night over,
My angle and I bear companye.

II.

I have haunts by the lone hill-cairn,
There I trip it the frost-time thorough,
'Mong wild moss and faded fern,
Where the blind mole rears his furrow ;
I have haunts by the shell-strewn tide,
But better to me the sweet stream side,
There the summer-night over,
'Neath grene-wood cover
My angle and I bear companye !

ANGLING ON A SUMMER NIGHT.

I.

ANGLING on a summer night,
When the moon-ray met the fairy
Tripping down a bank of light,
To the sweet loch of St Mary ;
Music floated sad and holy,
Every wild flower lent its tone,
And the sullen trout swam slowly,
Like the shadow of a stone.

II.

From the bank on Meggat stream,
Where a quiet fountain gushes
And the undulating gleam
Glances through a tuft of rushes ;
There I threw the silv'ry palmer
With a meditating arm,
For the crystal pool lay calmer
Than a sea beneath a charm.

III.

Was it but a fancied fin
O'er the glassy water gliding,
As I dropt the feather in,
Like an insect half confiding,

Gently mov'd and lightly shaken—
 Neared a little—wiling out,
 Till the fatal hook was taken
 By a huge and gleamy trout?

IV.

Quick as thought, the line unwound
 Flew along the streamlet narrow,
 With the sharp and rapid sound
 Of a solitary arrow ;
 But a gentle effort leading
 On the bank the captive lay,
 Tir'd, and quivering and bleeding,
 In his starry, rich array.

v.

Proudly gazed I to the lake,
 And the moonshafts, slant and slender,
 On its bosom lay awake,
 Like an armoury of splendour ;
 Proudly gazed I to the mountain !
 Voices floated far and wide,
 From the breeze, the flow'r, the fountain,
 Blessing me on every side !

WE PART NOT THUS.

I.

WE part not thus! nay, anglers, nay—
A farewell to the season!
So fill the bowl and drink away;
Who drinks not harbours treason.

II.

O fill it high! the joyous draught
Is native to our heather;
If bravely drain'd and largely quaff'd,
'Twill bind our hearts together.

III.

Now wintry winds with rapid pace
O'er mead and mountain sally;
And gloomily the waters race
Through each deserted valley.

IV.

No more, sweet birds, in merry strain,
Sing from their bowers of beauty;
Lay down the wand—the spring again
Will call it forth for duty.

v.

Lay down the wand—no longer now
The fearful trout is belling ;
All leafless left, the alder bough
Moans o'er his glassy dwelling.

vi.

Then heap, heap high our social hearth !
Why should the good fire flicker ?
And quaff ! quaff on ! the best of mirth
Lies deepest in the liquor !

THE BURNING OF THE WATER.

I.

FLASHES the blood-red gleam
Over the midnight slaughter ;
Wild shadows haunt the stream,
Dark forms glance o'er the water ;
It is the leisterers' cry—
A salmon, ho ! oho !
In scales of light, the creature bright
Is glimmering below.

II.

Murmurs the low cascade,
The tall trees stand so saintly,
Under their quiet shade
The river whispers faintly ;
It is the leisterers' cry—
The salmon, ho ! oho !
A shining path the water hath
Behind the shape of snow.

III.

Glances the ready spear
From harmless hands unheeded,
On in its swift career
The dream-like fish hath speeded ;

It is the leisterers' cry—
 The salmon, ho! oho!
 Along its wake, the torches break
 And waver to and fro.

IV.

Wildly the eager band
 Closes its fatal numbers;
 Across its glistening sand
 The wizard water slumbers:
 It is the leisterers' cry—
 The salmon, ho! oho!
 And, lightning like, the white prongs strike
 The jaded fish below.

V.

Rises the cheering shout
 Over the rapid slaughter;
 The gleaming torches flout
 The old, oak-shadowed water.
 It is the leisterers' cry—
 The salmon, ho! oho!
 Calmly it lies, and gasps, and dies,
 Upon the moss-bank low!

THE LYNNS OF GLENDEVON.

I.

O'ER the lynns of Glendevon, the dark trees hang
crowded,
While unseen whirl the waters below ;
'Mid spray and thick foliage an angler enshrouded
Waves his wand—waves his wand to and fro.

II.

In the lynns of Glendevon, from deep crevice
stealing,
The hungry trout watches its prey,
And when 'mid the white foam some stray fly lies
wheeling,
Slyly bears—slyly bears it away.

III.

Alas ! among morsels the sweetest and rarest,
That float down the streams of the brake,
Deceits ever mingle, in colours the fairest,
Capturing those—capturing those who partake.

IV.

'Tis thus in this bright world, at joys without
measure

Unheeding we ardently spring,
And forget that oft hid by the plumage of pleasure,
Lies a hook—lies a hook in the wing.



SONNET.

To the monastic mind thy quiet shade
Kindly accords, bewild'ring Darnaway!
Here, those retiring Powers, whose hermit sway
The hordes of gross emotions hold obey'd
Reign indolent, on bank or flow'ry glade.
A deep unusual murmur meets my ear,
As if the oak's Briarean arms were sway'd
Far off in the weird wind. Like timorous deer
Caught as he browses by the hunter's horn,
I stop perplex'd, half dreading the career
Of coming whirlwind. Then with conquer'd fear
Advancing softly through a screen of thorn,
From edge of horrid rock, abruptly bold,
Rushing thro' conduit vast, swart Findhorn I
behold.

FISHER WATTY.

I.

FISHER WATTY'S dead an' gane,
 Death amang his cairns has gripp't him;
 Aft afore, whan he wad fain
 Hae made the kittle chiel his ain,
 Watty gied a flaff an' slipt him.

II.

Noo at length the mools amang,
 The clrich carle has laid him fairly;
 Quoth he, "Ye've play'd yer pliskies lang,
 My faith! but ye maun end yer sang
 An' pack awa to saxton Charlie."

III.

Waes me! sin' canny Wat's awa,
 I feel sae lanesome an' sae weary,
 Tho' simmer winds abune me blaw,
 Ilk burnie seems a rin o' snaw
 An' Tweed gangs daundrin', douf an' dreary.

IV.

Aft I clim' the bosky brae,
 Aft I seek the haly rowan,
 At the gloamin' o' the day,
 E'er the starns begin their sway—
 Whan the lav'rock woos the gowan.

V.

Aft I wanner to the stane—
 The warlock stane whar late we parted ;
 Waes me ! sin' Fisher Watty's gane,
 My soople wan' I wald alane,
 Wi' feckless arm, ower pools deserted.

VI.

Here, the hazel boughs aboon,
 That to their mirror beck sae gaily,
 Puir Wat upon an April noon
 Gied his last fish its deadly stoun',
 An' as it wambled, gaff'd it brawly.

VII.

There, in yonner stream sae blate,
 Quoth he "whanc'er the cock's a-crawin',
 Anither east we'll aiblins get ;"
 But death was tirlin' at his yett
 An hour or twa afore the dawin'.

VIII.

In the kirk-yaird beild sae green,
Auld Watty's laid by saxton Charlie,
An' ay on ilka simmer's e'en
I think upon the time that's been—
An' as I wanner, miss him sairly.

PART SECOND.

NATIONAL SONGS.

NATIONAL SONGS.

BRITISH VALOUR.

I.

TRUE British valour kept at bay
Napoleon's dread advance,
When forward marched in stern array
The flower of haughty France ;
When the hero of a hundred fights
His ruthless eagles bore,
And Europe of her crowns and rights
Lay sacked from shore to shore.

II.

Then England's hearts were knit and sworn
To prove their valour true,
And gallantly each battle horn
Sang out at Waterloo ;

And the children of her soil repell'd
The fierce aggressor's thrust ;
While many a stalwart warrior yell'd
His death-ban in the dust.

III.

Shall traitor lips revile the fame
Our bold defenders won,
Or skulking malice soil the name
Of honoured Wellington?
And shall to tarnish England's crown
Convene the bastard crew?
Up Britons, guard your old renown—
Remember Waterloo!

THE CASTING OF THE CANNON.

I.

BRING iron ! bring iron ! what want we with gold ?
Our swords can win wealth, they have won it of old ;
Bring ore from the mines ! let the serf forge the
chain—

We'll cast England's cannon and conquer again !
Then cast the dark cannon, bring ore from
the mine,
We shall keep ourselves kings of the brine ?

II.

There is fame to be gather'd and victory won,
Ere sleep the red fires of the dark-throated gun ;
We have wrongs to redress, we have rights to
maintain,

And England's brave cannon shall thunder again !
Then cast the dark, &c.

III.

Deep traced on her bosom, our country records
The fame of her Navies—the deeds of her swords ;
Long, long as our mines of dark metal remain,
The brave British cannon shall conquer again !
Then cast the dark, &c.

IV.

Hurra for the iron ! the cannon and blade !
May the ore never fail and the oak never fade !
Each hostile invader, he threatens in vain,
Still Britain shall conquer again and again !
Then cast the dark cannon, bring ore from
the mine,
We shall keep ourselves kings of the brine !

THE BRITISH OAK.

I.

THE oak is Britain's pride!
The lordliest of trees,
The glory of her forest-side,
The guardian of her seas!
Its hundred arms are brandished wide,
To brave the wintry breeze.

II.

Our hearts shall never quail
Below the servile yoke,
Long as our seamen trim the sail
And wake the battle smoke—
Long as they stem the stormy gale
On planks of British oak!

III.

Then in its native mead
The golden acorn lay,
And watch with care the bursting seed
And guard the tender spray;
England will bless us for the deed
In some far, future day!

IV.

Oh! plant the acorn tree
Upon each Briton's grave;
So shall our island ever be
The island of the brave—
The mother-nurse of Liberty
And empress o'er the wave!



SONNET.

OUR fathers tell us of that glorious time,
When England's name stood foremost in the world,
And at its furthest confines they unfurl'd
The Lion-flag, and swept from clime to clime:
Their dim eyes brighten and their brows enlarge,
While they dilate upon her thrilling story—
Priestlike bequeathing to their children's charge
The oral records of their country's glory.
Gaze on the brows of these toil-withered men,
And ask them for such serviceable deeds
What gratitude their parent-isle concedes;
“Let England only call us forth again,”
Will be their brave reply, “and what *She* owes,
Tenfold shall be exacted from her foes.”

TO ERIN.

I.

SCOTLAND'S thistle kindly grows
With old England's native rose,
But the shamrock—Heaven befriend it!
Erin's shamrock lies untended.

II.

Hapless Erin! feud and spoil
Trample on thy bleeding soil;
When shall Peace exalt her token—
Murder's midnight league be broken?

III.

Shall the orphan cry unheard—
Famine her one ceaseless word
Howl unheeded—Misery shiver—
And this horror last for ever?

IV.

Hear, oh Heaven! oh God avert—
Searcher of the human heart!
Bending from thy throne of pity,
Answer Erin's wild entreaty!

NAVAL ADDRESS BEFORE BATTLE.

I.

BRAVE British tars ! your hostile fleets behold —
 A gallant shew !
 With ample ensigns o'er the main unroll'd
 Mark, mark, your country's foe,
 And onward guide each battle ship
 To break her haughty line,
 While rattling from the cannon's lip
 Your dark shot scour the brine.

II.

Shall honour'd England strike her ancient flag ?
 Queen of the wave !
 While flutters high a last and lonely rag
 Over her fallen brave,
 And while to guard the sacred shred
 Her faithful wield the sword ?
 The living shall avenge the dead
 Ere Britain's flag be lower'd !

III.

Then forward lead, and raise the thundering cheer,
 England for aye !
 Engage the van ; bring up the breathless rear
 In battle's fierce array ;

And let the proud Insulter dree
 For menace and for guile!
Shall not the Lions of the sea
 Avenge their injured isle?

SONNET.

IRELAND makes boast that her storm-circled isle
Harbours no offspring of that cursed breed,
After whose fashion Satan was decreed
To lick the dust and crawl on belly vile.
What! are there no rank serpents on her breast—
No secret asp-worms that her blood defile—
No scorpions arm'd with venom that infest
Her hills and mosses, nay, the altar stone
Seek as a shelter for their midnight guile?
And is there not, compressing thew and bone
Within his folds, a hydra grim'd with gore,
That on the marrow of the land hath fed?
St Patrick! rouse thee, like St George of yore,
Assail the dragon-fiend and lay him dead!

PEACE IN WAR.

I.

PEACE be upon their banners !

When our war-ships leave the bay—
When the anchor is weigh'd
And the gales
Fill the sails,
As they stray—
When the signals are made,
And the anchor is weigh'd,
And the shores of England fade
Fast away !

II.

Peace be upon their banners
As they cross the stormy main !
May they no aggressors prove,
But unite
Britain's right
To maintain ;
And unconquer'd, as they move
May they no aggressors prove ;
But to guard the land we love
Come again !

III.

Long flourish England's commerce!

 May her navies ever glide

With Concord in their lead,

 Ranging free

 Every sea

 Far and wide!

And at their country's need

With thunders in their lead,

May the ocean eagles speed

 To her side!

A SEA FIGHT.

I.

'TWAS somewhere off the Spanish coast,
While standing out to sea,
That we spied a gallant Frenchman
Carry sail upon our lee ;
Just arisen was the sun—
And the breeze, it blew apace,
As we shotted every gun
For the chase.

II.

But noon was nigh well over, ere
We near'd upon the foe ;
All under crowd of canvass,
Right royal did she go—
Show'ring bullets o'er the main,
While our frigate in her rear
Return'd the fire again
With a cheer !

III.

Yet soon from every frowning port
Our fatal flame we pour'd,
Until the Frenchman's foretop
Came crashing overboard—
While the sever'd riggings flew
All loosely by the mast,
And his weather-beaten crew
Look'd aghast.

IV.

Now, side to side, in combat close
The hostile frigates lie,
And round their country's banner
Its true defenders die ;
Rak'd by the murd'rous balls
The planks with crimson run,
While each seaman fights and falls
At his gun.

V.

But see upon the hostile deck
The gallant boarders stand,
Nor death nor closing danger
Can daunt the fearless band ;

Back, back—the foe, they cower !
The deadly contest past,
Old England's banners tower
From the mast !

VI.

Hurra ! hurra ! our noble tars
Let ev'ry Briton hail !
They guard their country's honour
At the gun and in the gale ;
No will but her's they reck,
As they cleave the stormy sea—
And while serving at her beck,
Still are free !—free ! free !
The freest of the free !

THE BAYONET CHARGE.

I.

WITH the bayonet, my boys, we shall forward to
the charge ;
'Tis unpleasant to remain,
While the bullets come like rain,
And every mother's son of us no better than a targe :
While we brave it all in vain
And the bullets come like rain,
On, onward with the bayonet—on, onward to the
charge !

II.

Brush forward at the enemy and stay their galling
fire ;
Have at them breast to breast,
Put their courage to the test,
True British hearts and bayonets will cause them
to retire ;
Let the weapon do its best,
Put their courage to the test,
Charge forward at the enemy ! repay their galling
fire !

III.

A billow of bright bayonets will scatter England's
foe—

The boldest turn the heel

At the ringing of our steel,

But the lightning of the Briton's eye is quicker
than his blow ;

As our faces we reveal

The boldest turn the heel,

Then forward with the bayonet, and scatter Eng-
land's foe !

THE VETERAN TAR.

I.

WHEN to Britain victorious, our navies return
From the stormy arena of war,
Oh! who of her generous offspring will spurn
The hand of the veteran tar?

II.

He needs not his toil-withered breast to disclose
And appeal to each separate scar;
Her own valiant children Britannia knows,
And will succour the veteran tar.

III.

May he whom the battle and billow have spared
Among those who lie perished afar,
With the tokens begirt of his country's regard
Live honour'd, a veteran tar.

IV.

And when the stern king of the grave passes near
To extinguish life's flickering star,
May the foe he so often has braved without fear
Prove a friend to the veteran tar!

A WAR-HYMN.

I.

WAKE to arms! the foe is near ;
Hark! the distant cannon roaring—
Soldiers, wake to arms!
See yon cloud of chargers pouring!
List the hostile cheer!
Soldiers, soldiers, wake to arms!

II.

Wake to arms! Time swiftly wears ;
On the ocean daylight gathers ;
Soldiers, wake to arms—
Britons! think upon your fathers—
Be your deeds like theirs!
Soldiers, soldiers, wake to arms!

III.

Wake to arms! around us roams
The trumpet's blast—the foe is nearing ;
Soldiers, wake to arms!
Fight for every tie endearing,
Your glory and your homes!
Soldiers, soldiers, wake to arms!

FILL, COMRADES, FILL.

I.

FILL, comrades, fill, no dismal frowns
Our joyous cups control ;
Oh ! who can face the enemy
That cannot face the bowl ?
 Then quaff, brave boys,
 And laugh, brave boys !
By laughing 'tis we thrive.
 To-morrow we'll fight
 And drink to-night
Until the morrow arrive.

II.

Why load with care the circling hours
And gathering ills foresee ?
Such valour as the goblet gives
Shall win us victory.
 Then quaff, &c.

III.

Wine warms the heart, wine steels the arm,
Wine makes the coward brave :
Fill, comrades, fill, and hand in hand
Strike up the bumper stave !
 Then quaff, &c.

A TOAST.

I.

WE are true men all, we are loyal at the heart,
And shall drink to Britain's Queen—up, hurra
her!

Who the bumper dishonours may speedily depart,
None are round us save those who should obey
her.

Then drink to Victoria—drink!
drink! drink!
None are round us, &c.

II.

Still higher while she reigns, let our island-star
ascend,

No tarnish shall we suffer on our glory,
But standing arm to arm, State and Sovereign
befriend

And prolong the golden page of British story.

Then drink to Victoria, &c.

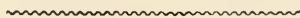
III.

Then mingle voice with voice, as the brimming
cup we quaff,

To Victoria Queen of islands and of ocean—
May her enemies lie abject below her sceptre staff

While we true men duly tender our devotion !

Then drink to Victoria, &c.



SONNET.

TAKE heed, nor vainly deem thou Russian bear !
In plenitude of thy presumptuous pride,
That thou may'st issue from thy desert lair
To cope with England's Lion. Far and wide
Her teeming arteries of wealth extend
And nourish the strong sinews of her power !
Calmly she views thy vaunting masts ascend,
Deferring in her scorn the vengeful hour,
That ampler chastisement and redder woe
May signalize the expiating blow.
In her resources, not in her parade,
Lie England's strong capacities for war ;
Her finger's gesture timeously displayed
Might from his iron throne unseat the Northern
Czar.

THE DYING HERO.

I.

THE leaves of my days are scatter'd,
Adieu, brave hearts, adieu!
The lamp of my life is shatter'd,
'Twill burn no more with you.

II.

Still, and the wish grows stronger
As death's hand bears me down,
I would share a little longer
Your danger and renown.

III.

Still for my country's glory
Would I the burden bear
Of life's eventful story
And die again for her.

IV.

But vain the wish—already
Dark shadows round me throng;
The grave's unsparing eddy
It hurries me along.

v.

Bring me my sword and place it
Beside me where I lie,
That I may once embrace it
And like a soldier die.

vi.

Bring, ere my thread be broken,
The honours won and worn,
Be every shining token
Earthward upon me borne!

vii.

The boons his country tenders
Are precious to the brave—
God grant her new defenders
To spring from every grave!

viii.

As ye have served, still serve her—
Adieu, brave hearts, adieu!
Your comrade's pray'r of fervour
Go with and prosper you!

WHERE IS THE STRENGTH &c.

I.

WHERE is the strength of England's arm, the
glory of our isle?
The floating towers of Trafalgar—the war-ships
of the Nile?
Britain's proud navies! are they still first in the
swelling breeze?
And is our land, as heretofore, the Empress of
the seas?

II.

The dauntless hearts—those daring tars, that in
her hour of woe
Fought nobly for their country's cause and crushed
their country's foe,
Repine disbanded on her shores, nor tread the
busy deck;
Calls not Old England upon these to save her
foundering wreck?

III.

Why bear we the insulting scorn of those that
crouch'd before,
While the same gallant souls we have to humble
them once more?
Think you, though vet'ran-grown, these hold no
sympathy with fame—
That they are dead to England's wrongs and blush
not at her shame?

IV.

Think you, were their ungrateful land, when hours
of need befall
To bid them forth again, that they would linger
at the call,
Nor forward throng in her behalf, a brave and
patriot crew,
Again to man her walls of oak and her banner
spread anew?

V.

Rise, England, rise! shall *they* control thy once
triumphant realm,
Who, while the daring foe draws near, lie slum-
bering at the helm,

Nor man the long-deserted decks of thy unvan-
quished line,
Nor call thy doughty mar'ners forth to conquer
on the brine ?

VI.

Awake! throw off those meddling knaves, that
insolently dare,
And with a gilded drug have drugg'd our Lion
in his lair.
By heaven! they may securely toy with his un-
conscious mane,
Long as he sleeps. Let them beware, when he
awakes again!

VII.

Rise, England, rise! may those that scorn the
sceptre of thy power
Kiss the red scourge that humbles them, and once
more their war-flags lower ;
Thee ever may thy foes confess the Empress of
the seas,
While the navies of our Father-land sweep fore-
most in the breeze!

THE CHILDREN OF THE OAKS.

I.

SHALL the eagle fold its wings,
When our island war-blast rings?
Shall they sleep or waking yield,
 When the trumpet invokes
 The children of the oaks
To the glorious battle field?
 Up and tell
 What befel
In the days of your fathers,
 When they guarded home and hearth,
And like them, go do your best
 For the country of your birth.

II.

Tell how every gallant heart
 Play'd the noble patriot's part,
 And amid the cannon smoke
 Turn'd a bosom to the flame,
 While new trophies to their fame
 Were hung up on England's oak,
 Up and tell
 What befel
 In the days of your fathers,
 When they guarded hearth and home,
 And like them, go do your best
 In the field and on the foam.

III.

Of brave Moore and Picton tell,
 How Lord Nelson fought and fell,
 While his flags the foeman lower'd,
 How Wolfe in glory died
 And England lost her pride
 In the storm and by the sword.
 Up and tell
 What befel
 In the days of your fathers,
 When they fought for King and land,
 And like them, go do your best,
 Bravely fall or nobly stand.

IV.

Tell of those that nobly dar'd,
Whom the wrath of battle spar'd,
While wing'd perils around them flew,
 And foremost give to fame
 His high unsullied name
Who fought at Waterloo.
 Up and tell
 What befel
In the days of your fathers,
 When they guarded land and King,
And like them, go do your best
 Till again the green oaks ring !

SONNET.

I HEARD a voice from that lone temple speak,
Which rears upon the Calton's Gothic brow
Its naked columns. "Wrongly nam'd art thou
The modern Athens—city of the Greek;
In vain among thy boasted sons we seek
The strong and patriotic energy,
That made thy Prototype the world's bright eye,
Haughty Dunedin! On the Lion-peak
Of yon Hymettus is no worship made,
And we, dishonour'd pillars, with the name
Of Parth'non mock'd, are your abiding shame—
A shrineless and deserted colonnade,
Where strangers point the finger of disdain
And cry, 'Twas Folly built the wise Minerva's
fane.'"

SONNET.

'Tis passing strange, that in this age of light,
That fierce inquisitor Intolerance
Leagued with the Bigot and masqued Hypocrite
Should walk abroad, and with a sin'ster glance
Scowl on good men, who boast not boundless creed,
Yet by example strong, in word and deed,
Prove what they hold sincere. 'Tis passing
 strange,
That in the pulpits of our National Church—
Through her high camp, this demon hath his range,
Leaving all mild persuaders in the lurch.
Be warn'd, protesting Faith! by the decline
Of that intolerant rule, which whilom grew
From out the Vatican. Protest anew,
Lest from the Papal head, woe be transferred to
 thine!

LAND, LAND.

I.

PERCH'D on the mast, a sailor spies
His native land afar,
And as its glittering cliffs arise
Shouts from the trembling spar,
Land, land! our own long-absent shore!
Welcome again—once more, once more!

II.

The cheering word is quickly spread
Among the expectant crew,
And tears of joy one moment shed,
Bright smiles the next pursue;
Land, land! re-echoes every lip,
Fast speed, speed fast, thou gallant ship.

III.

All eyes are strained from wave to wave,
Each anxious bosom warms,
When England's island old and brave
Reveals its brow of storms:
Land, land! the watchful seaman calls,
Our own dear land, her masted walls!

IV.

In prospect flash before the gaze
All fond, familiar forms,
When England's island through the haze
Reveals its brow of storms :
Land, land ! our own beloved shore !
Welcome again—once more, once more !

SONNET.

Too long, my countrymen, this factious mood—
This rival spirit, by some alien hand
Provok'd, hath been engender'd in the land ;
Too long our selfish senate hath withstood
The oft petitions of the wise and good,
And unto popular clamour lent its ear,
Forgetful that to-day's exulting cheer
May be to-morrow's desecration rude ;
If there be honest men on British earth,
Tho' long obscured by party's fierce disguise,
Now is their time in earnest to arise,
And from the servile garb unmask their worth—
As England's right hand counsellors to appear,
And on her young Queen's check arrest the tear !

THE SOVRAN OF ISLES.

I.

I WOULD seek, I would seek for a star at the
dawning—
The last western star and a cloud for the awning ;
The cloud so ætherial, spirit-woven and bland,
I could fill its light sail with a wave of the hand.

II.

I would watch, I would watch, from its ambient
fold
The course of the beautiful world, as it roll'd,
And mark your glad homes and the hills of the free,
In the sovrán of isles—who will watch them with
me ?

III.

I would guide, I would guide each bright ship of
the realm,
And direct the fair pilot enthron'd at the helm—
Discard from her presence each pitiful knave,
And surround England's throne with the good and
the brave.

IV.

I would give, I would give the oppressor his chain,
Repair the torn rights of the feeble again—
Would edge the blunt falchion of justice once more,
And the war-shatter'd buckler of mercy restore.

V.

I would lend, I would lend to the meanest an ear,
And prosp'ring the peasant, establish the peer—
Enrich the scant lot of the labouring throng
And fill the low hamlet with plenty and song.

VI.

I would watch, I would watch, from a cloud and
a star,
Your beautiful world, as it circles afar,
And the hills and the homes glancing up from the
sea
In the sovran of isles, who will watch them with
me?

PART THIRD.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.



MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

THE MYTHOLOGIST.

I.

ASTRIDE a stone an urchin sate,
It was a granite gray—
The shaft of some broken pillar, that
Across the desert lay,
And from the heathen hieroglyph
He scoop'd the moss away.

II.

In the city of the hundred gates,
Why should an urchin be,
Where there is neither tent nor kin,
Nor shade of acacia tree,
But the hidden lyre of the Memnon moans
Softly and solemnly ?

III.

The city of the hundred gates—
The column and the fane—
They look as quiet, as if they had
In a place of burial lain,
And the hand of the exhumers
Had raised them up again.

IV.

The urchin to his moody task
In idiot earnest fell;
With the point of a broken assagai—
The weapon worketh well!
He hath scooped the head of an Ibis
And a holy Asphodel.

V.

A Nubian boy he was and small,
And of a vampire kind,
To guess by the tan upon his limb
And the leer he threw behind,
And the glossless hair that laboured
Against the gusty wind.

VI.

But ever at his task he plied,
Right heartily and brisk,
Until the red sun on a line
Had lain his lazy disc,
And drew to its stretch the shadow of
The tapering obelisk.

VII.

Up rose the urchin from his work,
And round the granite gray
Ran frolicking with child-like step,
In solitary play,
Then buried in the yellow sand
His broken assagai.

VIII.

Upon the shaft in low relief,
Against the giant stone,
The Ibis and the Asphodel
And a grim Osiris shone,
And the coil of the Serpent-god was there,
And the pale Myronymon.

IX.

An earthen urn the Nubian took,
And through a vaulted pile
Ran to the gleamy waters of
The venerable Nile,
While from the flags crept lazily
The murky crocodile.

X.

Thrice in the stream he dipp'd the vase,
And thrice the water threw
Over his forehead, and again
The sacred pitcher drew
Under the marge, where tremblingly
The mystic lotus grew ;

XI.

Then lightly to the column hied—
What wills the Nubian there?
The dews fell thick as a rain-shower
Cheerless and chill to bear,
And the stars were stealing, one by one,
Into the silent air.

XII.

He laved from the hollow of his hand
The gray and figured shaft,
And of the cooling pitcher
At languid leisure quaff'd,
Then rolling on the yellow sand
Right lustily he laugh'd.

XIII.

Sleep came to the Nubian boy,
Like the coil of a worm he twined
His elfish limbs, and on his feet
His circling head reclined;
He lay, like a load upon the sand,
Which pilgrim had left behind.

XIV.

Into his dream a mummied form
Glided with soundless tread,
And with a waving hand unroll'd
The cerecloth from its head,
Fixing upon the wond'ring boy
The still gaze of the dead.

XV.

In many a long and faded web—
In many a mouldy band,
The figured wrappings were unswathed
With undulating hand ;
They fell upon the urchin's breast—
They fell on the yellow sand !

XVI.

He started from his dream ; it was
The full fierce blaze of day ;
Above the youth two gleamy snakes
In listless slumber lay ;
Their fangs upon his bosom bask'd,
A-lolling either way.

XVII.

They wake not ; must the urchin lie ?
A hurried heart is his ;
The sun beats red, and there is not
The murmur of a breeze,
And the sand is like a bed of fire
Heated to ten degrees.

XVIII.

He moves not—breathes not, how is this ?
The gaze of his jet-black eye
Is steady as the Memnon's is
That leans on his throne close by,
It meets the redded reptile glance
Fiercely and fearlessly.

XIX.

The lurid scale along the crest
With its gleaming of gold and blue
Droops at the frown of the Nubian child,
The snake-eye winceth too ;
Unwreathed is the slender train of life
And the coils, they are far and few.

XX.

Harmless glide the twain away ;
The Nubian boy is free !
He bounds to his feet with a scream of joy ;
Yet how should an urchin be
In the city of the hundred gates ?
'Tis marvellous to me.

XXI.

Thebes lies lonely by the Nile
In the garment of a king,
That hath lain on the anointed ribs,
A worn, wind-shifted thing,
That hath held the dead in its finery—
The bleach'd and the withering !

XXII.

Thebes lies lonely by the Nile !
Ages are crush'd for ever,
Since the thronged knee of the warrior
With his bow and teeming quiver,
And the daughter of the timbrel bent
To the eternal river.

XXIII.

Thebes lies lonely by the Nile !
The chaff of the desert runs
Through arches, where the breath of kings
Gave shape to a thousand ones,
And the roofs rang out at the mailed step
Of their bright battalions.

XXIV.

Why should an urchin wander, where
The caved and the quiet be,
And the hair of the Sphinx is won from its knot
Loosely and luringly ?
Hath she a new enigma birth'd
For such a boy as thee ?

XXV.

He looks to Memphis, " I have not
The panther's fearless eye ;
Where are the sepulchres—the coned—
Where folded Pharaohs lie—
The carved sarcophagus, that chests
The dust of royalty ?"

XXVI.

He looks to the Heliopolis—
The city of the sun—
The Altarage—the Idols,
Which the wilderness hath won ;
Is craft in the shell ? go, wake to life
Its priestly myrmidon !

XXVII.

The Oas is an isle of the sand,
Shining with trees and springs,
For the slumber of love and the folding up
Of the idle ostrich wings,
For the brief dream of the pilgrim, in
His perilous wanderings.

XXVIII.

Silently sits the Nubian boy
Under a flow'ry tree ;
He drinks of the honey from the comb
Of the wild Afric bee ;
He bathes in a fount, that runs from a rock
Coolly and gushingly.

XXIX.

A stately camel over him
Boweth its neck of grace ;
One might upon the rounded breast
A milk-white circle trace ;
The pride it was of Araby,
The fairest of its race.

xxx.

A moon and more are over, since
The wearied creature laid
Its lips to the water, where it ran
Under some eastern shade,
And now it laves them joyously
In a quiet, flow'ry glade.

xxxI.

Toward the trackless wilderness,
It coucheth on the knee ;
The Nubian leapeth to its neck,
“ A ring of gold for thee
To bear me to the happy tents
Of blessed Araby !”

xxxII.

The breath of the red Sirocco is
Like to the rushing of fire ;
It shrivels the heart, and under it doth
The wasted blood retire,
And the cords of life are straighten'd before
Its wild and withering ire !

XXXIII.

The breath of the red Sirocco is
Terrible to meet,
For the lip of an evil angel
Bringeth and guideth it,
And the lordliest and the loveliest
Lie buried at his feet!

XXXIV.

There is the corse of a camel
At evening on the sand,
There is the small corse of a boy,
And in his powerless hand
Is held for the reins a weed of the Nile,
Spun to a silky band.

XXXV.

Why to the Theban city went
The nameless Nubian child?
Was gold in the dream of his boyhood,
Under its pillars piled?
It was a far way for the young—
The witless and the wild!

TRUE LOVE'S BRIDAL.

I.

CULL flowers for true love's bridal—
Green leaves and blossoms rare ;
Nature makes gay providal
To deck the blushing fair.
Cull germs of the dew—
Open flowers in the noon—
A rose-bud or two
From the nurture of June—
Bright bulbs of the vale—
Star-flowers of the brake—
The broad cups that sail
On the silvery lake !

II.

Bring wines for true love's bridal—
Dark wines—a vintage prime !
And let the hands lie idle
In the glad heart's busy time.
Bring wines o'er the wave
To impassion the brain—
The Burgundy brave
And the foaming Champagne,

That the eagle may hold
His request to the dove,
And song become bold
In the banquet of love.

SONNET.

THE Nine that whilom haunted Castaly,
No longer like Immortals feast the ear
In concert with aërial melody,
Attendant on Apollo's tuneful sphere.
Alas! the Muse by me devoutly woo'd
From early youth is now an outcast lorn,
Whom all men, save her woocers hold in scorn,
And these, by whose lament she is pursued
More beggar than befriend her. Deep conceal'd
Amid their discord are her happier strains;
Ah! could she throw them off and stand reveal'd,
'Twere honourable then to seek her chains;
No gaud-bedizzen'd wanton would she be,
But re-anointed Queen of Castaly!

BRAVE ROBIN.

I.

I WALK'D yest'reen thro' Cawdor wood
An' caught a rovin' Robin ;
Sae piteously the wee bird sued,
It set mysel a-sobbin'.

II.

But oot I spak'—"ye saucy thing !
What need hae ye o' freedom ?
There's mony a bairn o' Adam's bluid
Wi' sterner doom decreed him."

III.

The silly bird glow'r'd in my face ;
A glow'r was a' it ventur'd,
But mair than words its bonnie e'en
Into my bosom enter'd.

IV.

Nae langer roun' the strugglin' wings
I fauld my han'—but hear him !
Upon a thorn brave Robin sings,
An' Willy lingers near him.

THE LAMP.

I.

TRIM, trim the lamp! this languid light,
It suits not joy, it fosters gloom;
Trim, trim the lamp! each merry sprite
Greets the full blaze, give room, give room;
Fly, shadows, fly,
Let mirth abound!
The goblet ply
Around, around!
And while wild music chains the soul,
Trim, trim the lamp, and fill the bowl!

II.

Trim, trim the lamp, the glaring noon
Shall find its rival in our halls;
Trim, trim the lamp, shut out the moon,
Too pale her light for festive walls.
Fly, shadows, fly, &c.

III.

Trim, trim the lamp, that all may mark
Of joy-bewilder'd eyes the throng;
Trim, trim the lamp! each kindling spark
Will wake new mirth and fresher song.
Fly, shadows, fly, &c.

A WINTER LANDSCAPE.

I.

THE dew-lark sitteth on the ice, beside the reed-
less rill ;
The leaf of the hawthorn flutters on the solitary
hill ;
The wild lake weareth on its heart a cold and
changed look,
And meets, at the lip of the moonlit marge, the
spiritual brook.

II.

Idly basks the silver swan, near to the isle of trees,
And to its proud breast come and kiss the billow
and the breeze ;
They wash the eider, as they play about the
bird of grace,
And boom in the same slow mood, away, to the
moveless mountain-base.

III.

The chieftain deer, amid the pines, his antler'd
forehead shews,
And scarcely are the mosses bent where that
stately one arose ;
His step is as the pressure of a light beloved hand,
And he looketh like a poet's dream, in some en-
chanted land !

IV.

A voice of winter, on the last wild gust of autumn
borne,
Is hurried from the hills afar, like the windings of
a horn ;
And solemnly and heavily the silver birches groan,
And the old ash waves his wizard hand, to the
dim, mysterious tone.

V.

And noiselessly, across the heaven, a gray and
vapoury shred
Is wandering, fed by phantom clouds, that one by
one are led
Out of the wide north, where they grow within
the aged sea,
And in their coils the yellow moon is labouring lazily.

VI.

She throws them from her mystic urn, as if they
were beckon'd back
By some enchantress, working out her spells upon
their track ;
Or gathers up their fleecy folds, and shapes them,
as they go,
To hang around her beautiful form, a tracery of
snow !

VII.

Lo! winter cometh! and his hoar is heavy on the hill
And curiously the frostwork forms below the
rimy rill ;
The birth of morn is a gift of pearl to the heath
and willow-tree,
And the green rush hangs o'er its water bed,
shining and silvery.

VIII.

From the calm of the lake, a vapour steals its
restless wreath away,
And leaves not a crisp on the quiet tarn, but the
wake of the swan at play ;
The deer holds up the glistening heath, where his
hoof is lightly heard,
And the dew-lark circleth to his song—sun-lost
and lonely bird.

THE SILVER HORN.

A BALLAD.

I.

THE sweetest hours of our slumber-time
Are when the dawn-dews fall—
When the silver stars draw down their hoods,
And deep among the glimmering woods
Song-birds are stirring all.

II.

It was about this tide of the morn,
That I woke from a gentle dream,
And still the sound of a hunting horn
Rang floating o'er the stream,
For I had dreamt of a summer chase
And a palfrey white as cream.

III.

No palfrey, but a charger tall
Came prancing into view—
A lusty steed with trappings gay,
And on its mane thick-sown there lay
The beads of the morning dew.

IV.

There was rider none, but by its side
A ladye of the bower ;
Slim she was as the lilye stalk,
And faire as the lilye flower !

V.

With silken ribbon intertwined
Among her fingers small,
She curb'd as if with reins of steel
The charger strong and tall ;
It bow'd its head to the maiden's hand
And turn'd at the maiden's call.

VI.

The silver horn rang out again ;
It rang from the oaken shade ;
Shrill and sweet seem'd the hunter's blast,
As it floated thro' the glade.

VII.

Its merry notes were floating still
The trees of the grene-wood round,
When a red hart cross'd the forest way
All at a single bound ;
By its pant and speed, I knew full well
It fled before the hound.

VIII.

Behind it, at a bowshot's length,
There came our Baron gay ;
Like one he seem'd, that was born to brave
No month but the merry May.

IX.

Clad was he in sapling green
With a belt of the doe-skin faire,
And in his hand was the good long bow
Which England's yeomen bear.

X.

Strange the amaze of the lordly youth
At the ladye and the steed ;
Methought, as I watch'd from the warder's tower,
Yon stag may softly speed,
For neither by hound nor cloth-yard shaft
Will the gallant creature bleed.

XI.

Yet calmly with her full blue eye,
The maiden his gaze withstood,
And again the silver horn rang out
From the passes of the wood ;
It seem'd as if the blast were borne
Thro' the boughs of the oak-tree rude.

XII.

The charger pranced, the charger neigh'd,
And toss'd its dewy mane,
But at the maiden's gentle beck
Its wild wrath fell again ;
And like a very lamb it stood,
Curb'd with so light a rein.

XIII.

His bonnet gay the stripling doff'd,
But the ladye no heed bestow'd ;
Her thoughts and her eyes fell wandering,
As if through the forest broad ;
Methought it was lack of courtesy,
So to slight the Baron's nod.

XIV.

Again and again, through the oaken glade
Rang out the hunter's horn ;
It seem'd as if from the sky above
The quivering notes were borne,
And fierce and fast was the winded blast
I heard on that woeful morn.

XV.

There was tremour methought in the Baron's
knee,
And his cheek grew white with fear ;
The shrill sound of that lonely horn
Was a dismal thing to hear,
For the sweet merry notes it sang at first
Grew fiercer, as they drew near !

XVI.

Upon the maiden's slender form
Was fix'd his wond'ring eye !
Yet all unmoved the ladye stood,
While the hunter's blast was high ;
She look'd into the leafy wood,
She look'd on the dewy sky.

XVII.

“ Art thou of a kin to Rosalice—
To Rosalice of the bower ;
Slim was she, as the lilye stem,
Faire as the lilye flower ?”

XVIII.

So spake the Baron to the maid ;—
Slowly she turn'd the eye ;
“ Baron ! I am that slighted one,”
Was her calm and sad reply ;
Slowly again she turn'd her gaze
To the glimmering wood hard by.

XIX.

Once more rang out the silver horn ;
It rang a startling blast !
From heaven's four winds, it seem'd as it came
And the notes ran loud and fast ;
The charger pranced, the charger neigh'd,
And the Baron drew back aghast.

XX.

Out stepp'd a lusty forester
From under the grene-wood shade ;
With solemn tread in dark array
He issued from the glade ;
Above his brow the sullen plume
Of a sable helmet play'd.

XXI.

Three forest outlaws follow'd him,
All at a measured tread ;
Betwixt them was a coffin borne
With green boughs overspread ;
The coffin on a litter stood
And a cross lay at the head.

XXII.

Why paler grows the Baron's cheek ?
Why neighs the charger tall ?
I see no maiden of the bower,
I see but a waving pall—
A pall that waveth to the breeze
And a fresh turn'd grave withal.

XXIII.

The outlaw chief on his silver horn
Windeth a doleful air ;
His followers three with solemn step
The lonely litter bear ;
The Baron's hand is on his brow,
He mutters a secret prayer.

XXIV.

The outlaw chief on the dark steed sits,
And still he winds the horn,
And still the pall shakes dismally
Under a withering thorn ;
And still upon the fresh turn'd sod
The Baron gazeth lorn.

XXV.

With silent step the mourners three
Around the grave-pit tread ;
Softly they lift the funeral shell
And lower the quiet dead ;
The outlaw chief to the Baron turns
With a slow shake of the head.

XXVI.

“Thou Baron bold! thy work behold
And rue the evil hour,
When gentle Ros’lice thou didst wrong,
The maiden of the bower!
Slim was she as the lilye stalk,
And faire as the lilye flower!

XXVII.

“A malison be on thy head
For this thy wicked sin!
Dearer to me was Rosalice
Than all my mother’s kin;
But he had most the right to wear,
That had the power to win.

XXVIII.

False lord! behold thy work of woe;
These stripling years alone,
They shield thee from a desperate man,
But cannot change the outlaw’s ban—
His blighting malison.

XXIX.

“ Remorse, its fires continually
Shall feed within thy breast,
Nor child’s nor helpmate’s gentle hand
May lull them into rest,
But woe in all its withering forms
Shall be thy constant guest.”

XXX.

The outlaw ceased, then moodily
Upon his black steed borne ;
He plunged into the thicket green
And pass’d the rustling thorn ;
Among the flowery glades far off
Is heard his hunting horn !

XXXI.

Another man our Baron is,
He paces tower and hall,
Yet starts afraid from the very shade
That glideth on the wall,
The hues of youth from his brow are flown
And his features are shrunken all.

xxxii.

Alack-a-day ! that woe should light
Upon our broad roof-tree ;
Its leaves are dropping one by one,
They are dropping silently—
No child nor helpmate our Baron hath
To lighten his miserye.

xxxiii.

The outlaw roams on his forest lands
Around the moss-grown tower ;
Below the thorn at sound of the horn
Sits Rosalice of the bower ;
Slim, slim is she as the lilye stalk,
Faire, faire as the lilye flower.

NO.

I.

WING not the wailing plover,
Harm not the wounded roe,
Prove tender to thy lover,
If thou must say him—No.

II.

Sweet looks and kind expressions
Will heal the bitter blow ;
Love's trouble only freshens
When anger prompts the—No.

III.

With some few drops consoling,
Leave sweet the cup of woe,
Lest knells be set a tolling
By every heedless—No.

STARS.

I.

TIMID stars are peeping
O'er us, two or three,
Silv'ry clouds lie sleeping
Westward on the sea.
Who with eye averted
Heedless turns the brow?
Lovers that are parted
Think together now.

II.

Stars unite affections,
Stars keep lovers true ;
All sweet recollections
Burn at fall of dew ;
All kind thoughts assemble
In the musing breast,
When the first stars tremble
On the darkening west.

LIST, LADYE, LIST.

I.

LIST, ladye! list a lover's tale—
 His heart's unsought confession;
 Are tears with thee of no avail
 When love is the transgression?
 Ah! so enforced, some tender soul
 Would grant the passion favour,
 For, at sweet Pity's kind control,
 Fast resolutions waver.

II.

But thou art mail'd by pride within
 Against all charm of feeling,
 And he alone, who woos to win
 May bare this stern concealing.
 Yet list, bright ladye! nor engage
 Disdain with my presuming;
 Be gracious in thine April age!
 'Twill keep thee ever blooming.

III.

The strange, though transitory frown
 Youth's petted brow engenders—
 Will brand the same when life goes down,
 And scorn find no defenders.

List, ladye ! list a lover's tale—
A heart's unsought confession ;
Are tears with thee of no avail
When love is the transgression ?

SONNET.

IMAGINATION, wayward sorceress !
Why dost thou lead me from this anxious earth
To thy strange chaos of unreal birth ?
Why dost thou shew me forms of loveliness,
Teaching new sounds and unfamiliar hues ?
Ah ! to describe the wonder-shapes that throng
That airy world, I find no power in song ;
What seeks the privileged votary, that pursues
Thy rainbow track, with wealth, or power, or state,
When legions he can raise and courtiers bland
At will, and arm'd with thy enchanting wand
Thrones, cities, empires in the air create ?
Strange Power ! that to the Passions dost impart,
Priesthood, thy temple is the poet's heart !

LOCH SKENE.

LIKE the eye of a sinless child,
That moss-brown tarn is gazing wild
From the heath-fringe, bright with stars of dew,
Up to the voiceless vault of blue.

It seemeth of a violet tinge,
Shaded under its flowery fringe ;
For the dark and purple of moss and heather,
Like night and sunset, blend together.

That tarn, it lieth on the hills,
Fed by a thousand infant rills,
Which are ever weeping in very sadness,
Or they smile through their tears, with a gleam
of gladness.

You may hear them in a summer's hour
Trickling, like a rainbow shower,
From yon rock, whose rents of snow
Lie shadow'd in the tarn below.
It looketh from the margin bare,
Like a headstone in a churchyard fair ;
But the heavy heron loveth well
Its height, where his own sentinel

He sits, when heaven is almost done
With the slow watch of the sun ;
And the quiet day doth fold
His wings in arches of burning gold.

There is a lonesome aged cairn,
Rising grey through the waving fern ;
It tells of blanch'd, mysterious bones,
Buried below the crumbling stones ;
But the shadow of that pile of slaughter
Lies breasted on the stirless water,
As if no mortal hand had blent
Its old, unearthly lineament.

A wizard tarn is grey Loch Skene !
There are two islands sown within ;
Both are like, as like the other,
As brother to his own twin-brother ;
Only a birch hangs o'er the one,
Where the kindred isle hath none.
The tresses of that weeping tree
Hang down in their humility.

'Tis whisper'd of an eyrie there,
Where a lonely eagle pair
In the silver moonlight came,
To feed their young by the holy flame ;

And at morn they mounted far and far,
Towards the last surviving star.
Only the forsaken nest
Sighs to the sea-winds from the west,
As if they had told in their wandering by,
How the rightful lord of its sanctuary
Mourneth his fallen mate alone
On a foamy Atlantic stone.

Never hath the quiet shore
Echoed the fall of silver oar,
Nor the waters of that tarn recoil'd
From the light skiff gliding wild ;
But the spiritual cloud that lifted
The quiet moon and dimly drifted
Away in tracery of snow,
Threw its image on the pool below,
Till it glided to the shaded shore,
Like a bark beneath the moveless oar.

Out at the nethermost brink there gushes
A playful stream from its ark of rushes,
It leaps like a wild fawn from the mountains,
Nursing its life with a thousand fountains,
It kisses the heath-flower's trembling bell,
And the mosses that love its margin well.

Fairy beings, one might dream,
Look from the breast of that silver stream,
Fearless, holy, and blissful things,
Flashing the dew-foam from their wings,
As they glide away, away for ever,
Borne sea-ward on some stately river.

That silver brook, it windeth on
Over slabs of fretted stone,
Till it cometh to the forehead vast
Of those gorgon rocks that cast
Their features many a fathom under,
And, like a launch through surge of thunder,
From the trembling ledge it flings
The treasures of a thousand springs ;
As if to end their blissful play,
And throw the spell of its life away.

Like a pillar of Parian stone
That in some old temple shone,
Or a slender shaft of living star,
Gleams that foam-fall from afar ;
But the column is melted down below
Into a gulf of seething snow,
And the stream steals away from its whirl of hoar,
As bright and as lovely as before.

There are rainbows in the morning sun,
 Many a fair and gorgeous one—
 Arches of rarest jewellery,
 Where the elfin fairies be,
 Through the glad air dancing merrily.

* * * * *

Only it mocks the heart within,
 To wander by the wild Loch Skene,
 At cry of moorcock, when the day
 Gathers his legions of light away.

For the sadness of a fallen throne
 Reigns when the golden sun hath gone,
 And the tarn and the hills and the misted stream
 Are shaded away to a mournful dream.

LINES.

I.

A BOYISH hand hath traced them ;
They are thoughts of a feebler age,
But Time had long effaced them
From Memory's mystic page.

II.

Above them, as I linger,
Like phantom lines they seem,
Traced by the spirit's finger
In some unconscious dream.

III.

Yet they are mine—I own them ;
They have my heart's device
Graven with fire upon them—
I need not test them twice.

IV.

And throbs this heart unaltering
In its wishes, joys, and truth,
Since these first strains fell faltering
From the untaught lips of youth ?

v.

Are not its air-dreams broken ?
Are not its hopes displaced ?
Tell then, by what one token
Is this their kinship traced.

vi.

How is it, as they tremble
Through the medium of my tears,
That in form they still resemble
The strains of riper years ?

vii.

Tell by what token guided,
Her child the mother knows,
Though across his brow have glided
Changes, and years and woes !

viii.

'Tis thus, though Mem'ry faileth
To recal each boyish line,
A single glance availeth
And I claim their spirit as mine !

THE RE-UNITED.

I.

By starlight, our farewell we stole, when the
boughs were gently rocking,
And the daybirds slept, there was one awake our
tender whispers mocking ;
By starlight when the mountain stag descends to
birchen cover,
And the hinds keep watch on Achilty to meet
their stately lover.

II.

Our hearts that night were sorrowful, we held
them close together,
And gazed upon the silent lake that lay among
the heather ;
A line of misted silver cross'd the surface, wild
and solemn,
Before us reared a tall dark tree its solitary column.

III.

We held our hearts together close, that both might
feel their beating ;

Ah ! say have they the truer throb at parting or
at meeting ?

We held them close some sad full hours, I know
not how they glided ;

Love's time is as a dreamer's time, unmeted,
undivided.

IV.

Kind commune held we, though our vows were few
and softly spoken,

But every interchange of look was silence newly
broken,

And every pressure of the hand reveal'd some
secret longing,

As if themselves across the lips the natural words
were thronging.

V.

Such time of bliss may not endure, tinged though
it be with sorrow—

Though the same stars that shone that night were
shining on the morrow ;

Alas ! the gazers that had gazed together on their
faces,
Took farewell ere they rose again of love and
love's embraces.

VI.

But Time once more, and iron Fate beyond all
thought grown tender,
Have cast together our true hearts for mutual
surrender,
That the lanthorns of Hope may lead where Love's
ascent is dreary,
And happiness not die away within this world so
weary !

LINES.

I.

I SHALL live in a cloud,
My heart's blood is frozen,
And all are turn'd proud
Whom as friends I had chosen ;
I shall tear me away
From the slight—lingering bond ;
One only shall say,
I am fond—ever fond.

II.

What heed I to part,
When none will remember,
When all round the heart
Is as bleak as December ?
I shall tear me away,
Let what will come beyond ;
One only shall say,
I am fond—ever fond.

III.

Ah! friendships are fleet,
As smiles upon faces ;
There's guile when men meet
In their words and embraces ;
There's guile and decay—
Flaw and dross in the bond ;
One only shall say,
I am fond—ever fond.



SONNET.

A SABBATH feeling steals across my heart ;
The work-day cares that in tumultuous train
Made populous its image-holds depart ;
I feel as if each earth-retaining chain
Unlink'd in secret by some angel's hand,
Fell from my toil-worn limbs, and left me free
To gain those holy mountains, which command
The sun-bright prospect of Eternity.
On their prophetic summits, as I stand,
Seven tiers of shining ramparts meet my gaze—
Seven hosts of seraphs their star-banners raise
And ward the sloping frontiers of the land ;
Far off the palace-grounds of Heav'n I see,
Love's cleansing fount and Life's eternal tree !

TO A DOVE IN A DESERTED
CHURCH-YARD.

I.

MEEK mourner! from the willow tree
Pouring thy vesper melody,
A sad and holy ditty!
Grief hath its natural home in thee,
Companion'd with Pity.

II.

Truth—the strong constancy of thought,
Which, when hopes wither, changes not,
Is thine, thou gentle weeper!
Than the deep sorrows of thy lot,
Are human sorrows deeper?

III.

It is not wonderful to find
Thee o'er the dust of human-kind,
Haply a maiden's token,
Telling thy story to the wind—
The weary and heart-broken!

IV.

Thou lovest the lone quietude—
The grass-graves and the waving wood—
The gray old chapel shining
Amid the drifts of ivy rude,
From its worn walls declining.

V.

Cushat! where is thine early mate?
Widow'd art thou and desolate
Nor pitied nor befriended;
Life is a vain and varied state
Of changings unintended.

VI.

But sympathies! thou canst not look
For these in this deserted nook?
Few footsteps wander hither—
Sown here the violets of the brook
Would wither—droop and wither!

VII.

The staff of age at times hath brought
Its hoary burden to the spot
In solitary musing,
Dream over dream, and thought o'er thought,
Creating and confusing.

VIII.

And thou, from some tall bough above,
Uttering thy soft note of love,
 Hast still'd the inward riot
Of his worn heart, consoling dove!
 Thou minister of quiet !

IX.

Youth too,—the sprightly form of youth
Hath paused before some stone uncouth,
 Stricken by thy low measure,
And taught that lifetime is, in truth,
 A transitory treasure.

X.

Bearer of hope ! celestial dove—
Bright emblem of the blest above !
 Pursue thy thrilling story,
The legend of a home of love
 In the far land of glory.

LINES.

I.

THE singing bird of happiness
Is flown from Lucy's breast ;
Joy leaves amid, it long had hid
Its quiet nest.

II.

But ah ! the bough of melody
Is become a songless thorn ;
Its leaves are shed—its dweller fled—
And Lucy lorn.

III.

Alas ! that Love's deceitfulness
Hath been so sadly proved ;
None may restore the joy-bird more,
Love hath removed.

THE OFFERING OF THE WISE MEN.

I.

BENEATH the angel of the star
Over the manger lowly,
Where on its mother's knee, behold!
The Infant prophesied of old,
Immaculately holy!

II.

And o'er the weary deserts led
By his progressive lustre,
Gather around the Virgin-born,
Ancients and sages travel-worn,
A reverential cluster!

III.

Before the blessed babe, they spread—
Have they a costlier treasure?
Gold from the borders of the sea
And incense out of Araby
In unreserved measure.

IV.

Aye! costlier than the purest gold
In Oriental coffer,
And richer than the amber showers
Wrung from the chalices of flowers,
The treasure which they offer.

V.

It is the homage of the heart
Toward the Babe of wonder ;
The shadows of Philosophy
And spectres of Idolatry
Fall silently asunder.

VI.

Are these the prophets of the east,
That among kings have taken
Their place of censure, and have stood
Over the breathless multitude,
Gigantic and unshaken ?

VII.

Sagest when humblest, see them bow
In eager adoration !
Faith, taught from impulses above
Beholds the sacrifice of love—
The marvellous oblation.

VIII.

Even in the Infant Virgin-born,
They view a holy vision—
The sorrowing Jesus on the tree
Bearing his load of agony,
And undeserv'd derision.

IX.

There too, the risen Christ they see,
Accepted of the Father—
The Prince that mediates on high—
He that returns in victory,
To whom the nations gather!

MAB'S SONG.

I.

BUILD me a bark of the bracken tree,
Light as the wing of the lone cuckoo,
To sail by the moonlight merrilye
Over the shining, summer dew.

II.

An alder leaf on a moor-cock's plume,
And a marsh-flower at the stern,
With a till of the snow-white musherom
And a flag of the yellow fern.

III.

Its cables of the water weed,
That grew in a silver lake,
With light oars of the hollow reed,
And music in its wake.

IV.

And the mar'ners in my bracken barge,
They shall have eyes of the northern blue,
And locks that flame in the violet dark
With an orient, amber hue.

v.

They shall be clad in the oak-leaf green,
With helm of the acorn shell,
And a plume of the thistle-down, between
The thyme and the heather bell.

vi.

Three and twenty, twenty and three—
All chosen by the span,
And a good blade of the juniper tree
At the girdle of every man.

vii.

Sing fal de rol, fal de rol, up we go
To our cousin of the moon;
Sing fal de rol, fal de rol, to and fro,
In the musical month of June!

viii.

Our barge is built of the bracken tree!
Gently and lightly row
By the serpent clouds, that lazily
Upturn their coils of snow.

IX.

Sing fal de rol, fal de rol, wake the wind—
His ringlets fluttering fair!
We leave no wish to the world behind,
Nor think of the thankless there.

X.

From star to star, by the dewy way
That to the moon-land leads—
Heave to, heave to! the rosy day
Is tracing his chariot steeds.

XI.

Our bracken barge rides in the air,
Its cable swaying free,
And the arm of the elfin mariner
Is folded lazily.

MUSIC.

I.

MUSIC was born within the sea
Upon a wave-string fair—
Foam'd from the finger curiously
Of the immortal air.

II.

A wind-god was her father, on
Their white dishevell'd manes
His car-steeds bore the dreamy tone—
The solitary strains.

III.

Her step was in the shell, as if
Amid its cavern crept
Some witch-word, woke to life, from where
Its coiling magic slept ;

IV.

And in the flower, when dewy bees
Around its golden rim
Sang softly to the morning sun
Their uninstructed hymn :

v.

And in the rock, where Echo's harp
Was buried long ago ;
Her sandall'd foot awakes the tone
Of mystery below.

vi.

Tell of the olden image-time—
The minstrelsy of kings—
The dark-eyed girls, that taught their love
On a lute of silver strings !

vii.

Tell of the beautifully born—
The eloquently spoken—
Of hearts that music heal'd, the which
Love and Despair had broken !

viii.

Tell of the memories that wait
On some disused strain,
Which the delirious finger calls
Out of the past again.

IX.

Some lost air that unconsciously
 Rewakens at the time
A cradle murmur, turn'd to some
 Old legendary rhyme !

X.

We love them, Music ! as of thee,
 Responding to our care ;
Thou, flinging back the raven wreathes
 Of thy unfolded hair !

XI.

Child of the wind ! and Priestess of
 The hollow heaving sea !
We give our homage, and we bring
 Our hearts to thee !

THE RAVEN'S NEST.

I.

I'VE miss'd the tenderest yearling
Out of my little stock ;
There is a hatch of ravens in
The crevice of a rock :
Think you the old birds thieve among
The feeble of my flock ?

II.

They have an ugly nest—'tis up
Below a birchen tree,
Just over by yon old red stone,
Methinks, as you may see—
'Tis black, and ugly, and withal,
Is woven curiously.

III.

Croak, croak—What say you, rascal ?
In sooth, you're hearty, eh ?
By the wan feather in your breast !—
It seemeth run astray.
Raven, where got you it ?—'tis of
An alabaster gray.

IV.

Croak, croak—Out on thee, wizard ;
Thou'rt heartier than before.
Betwixt us two, as I am born,
There lies a little score—
Slight fear have I, albeit thou
Art croaking o'er and o'er.

V.

They say it is an evil bode—
God help me if it be—
There is the young voice of a lamb
A-bleating toward me—
The small tone of that little one
It soundeth piteously.

VI.

It crieth for its playmate—
Alas, my pretty fay !
Out, out upon the naughty bird
Hath stolen it away.
No more you'll meet again—again—
For ever and for aye !

VII.

I'll be avenged—I'll be avenged,
In faith, my little one,—
The deed I do were better
The earlier it were done ;
Yon bird shall hold a heavy heart
Ere setting of the sun.

VIII.

Up springs the boy—he climbeth—
It is a frightful track—
Good need of nerve if ever he
Would bring him safely back ;
The very eyeball stretcheth out
Intensely on the rack.

IX.

O God! It is a fearful way—
'Tis dark, and steep, and wild,
And he that treadeth it, is but
A very little child.

X.

Another step—another one—
Hold fast the birchen tree ;
What would thy careful mother think,
Her only son to see,
Up by the raven's nest alone
Ascending fearlessly ?

XI.

The prize, the prize ! what meaneth
The old bird by his croak ?
'Tis harsh and ominous, as if
Some angry wizard spoke :—
He sitteth at a fathom's length,
Upon a dwarfish oak.

XII.

The prize ! the prize ! there is a pair
Of little ones, I wist ;
The black down groweth rarely
On the unfeather'd breast,—
They peep and mutter to themselves
In their unholy nest.

XIII.

Out on ye, little ravens,
What have ye there to show,—
There is the white fleece of a lamb,
'Tis trodden all below ;
And, like to blood-spots mingle with
The consecrated snow.

XIV.

You're wrung or twisted at the neck,
Ungraciously I ween,
A white post and a gallows chain
Are goodly to be seen ;
On either side a quiet rogue,
And a crooked post between !

XV.

Out on thee old bird, out on thee !
Thou'rt surly as a sprite ;
Thine eye is like the beetle's wing
Before a lantern light,
'Tis gloss'd with fire—the rounded orb—
Mysteriously bright.

XVI.

Croak, croak—in sooth, that angry wing
It flappeth to and fro ;
I fear me for the gallant boy—
'Tis horrible below,
All dread and deep—a frightful leap
The way that he must go.

XVII.

He holdeth fast—he holdeth true;
A shaking of the knee
Would plunge him fifty fathoms down—
May God deliver thee!
The raven round thy gentle head
It saileth angrily.

XVIII.

What means the bird? a swoop—O Heaven!
'Tis over—all is well!
I feel as if the blood came back
To my heart's empty cell ;
O God! what I have suffered,
It were a task to tell.

XIX.

The boy is safe, and laughingly
Is seated on a stone,
He shouteth to the raven bird,
'Tis sailing all alone
Without a wake in the deep blue ;
Yet, as it wheeleth on,
You may hear, as from afar, its wild
And melancholy tone !

SONNET.

I SAW the form of Mercy bend its way
To a low roofless hovel, under shade
(Not shelter) of whose walls, a wretch had made
Lodgement obscure, and as companion lay
With dismal fiends—tormentors of his breast,
Pride, Hatred, Scorn, Revenge, Remorse, Despair.
When I beheld the bright consoling guest,
Fain would I know what errand led her there,
So, straightway towards the forbidding place
I trod and raised the latch. No haggard wretch
But a meek sufferer lay at ample stretch
Upon a cleanly pallet. With sweet grace
The angel-minister stood and beaming look ;
One hand a cup outstretch'd, the other God's
great Book !

SONNET.

OH! many are the tyrants of the heart,
And many revolutions hold their course
Within its little empire. There enforce
The headstrong passions their despotic sway ;
Love, Jealousy, and Envy play their part,
And panther-brow'd Revenge and Hatred swart ;
All in their turn hold rule, yet none obey.
The firmest seated of the usurping Powers
Is the vice-fisted dotard, Avarice grey,
Who, when Death's hand below its vaunting towers
Springs the disastrous mine, is often found
Over the abject empire sovereign still—
Holding his brother Passions closely bound,
And Reason, lawful king, a captive to his will.

SONNET.

AN embassy of angels from afar
Return'd to Heav'n's great gate of adamant,
With harps and censers and celestial chant ;
The sinless tribes of each unfallen star
Wond'ring look'd forth at the triumphal car,
Shielded with luminous wings, which overhead
Cross'd throneward, by ætherial coursers led ;
Nor bore these forms the panoply of war.
But in the robes of Mercy all array'd,
The Legate, He, that of his own free will
Endur'd th' atoning death on Calv'ry's hill,
And of the cross a saving Peace-tree made,
Where ev'ry sin, ennailed by hand of Faith,
The goblin forehead wounds of captive Death !

A STORM PICTURE.

Is the wind out in quest of her, the lone and laden
ship?
Like a wroth and meagre ban-dog from his iron
leash let slip—
The steersman shivers at the helm—all starless is
the night,
And the snow-flake slanteth to his brow—the whist-
ling and the white.
She driveth as the eagle does, when the lightnings
follow him,
And plungeth down till her decks are charged up
to the very brim,
And her ports drink in the brine, the dark and
foamy stream,
With a gurgling sound, and the moan, as of one
that dreameth a horrid dream.
There are lanthorn lights astern, within that lonely
ship, I wist ;
They flicker through the sprays afar, like faint
fires in a mist,

And on the shivering sheets, anon, their lurid
glare they throw,
And mock the dance of a demon throng on the
raging wave below.
She hurries on with the madden'd march of some
disaster'd king,
The ermines of whose royalty the fitful breezes
fling,
While the hell-raised bands of Misery pursue in
shapes of wrath,
And treason with her councils dark bewildereth
his path.
There is a crashing of the masts; the spar, and
shroud, and sail
Are borne away in the vengeful swirl of the un-
sparing gale,
And from her ribbed side, the struggling plank is
reft,
And there is not a shred of her glory on the dark
wild water left.

HYMN.

I.

METHINKS for ev'ry death-freed Mind,
The Sov'reign Maker hath design'd
 A world, yon stars among—
That, prompted by the springs of Love
Was the great Hand, which from above
 The sparkling Pageant hung.

II.

Feels not each soul, though fetter'd here,
Itself the spirit of a sphere
 Waiting its angel birth,
When, vested with a higher claim,
'Twill burst, like some electric flame,
 The prison gates of earth?

III.

Why are the longings of the breast
So countless, vast, and free of rest,
 Like billows in the gale?
Why thus are all its wishes tried,
If never to be satisfied,
 Beyond their human pale?

IV.

Strange! that the heart should set its thoughts
On these far-shining, silent spots—
The stars of glory term'd,
Were all such fond aspirings nursed,
Like the night's idle dreams, to burst
Unreal—unconfirm'd.

V.

A thousand evils far and near
Retard Ambition's proud career
Within this world of blight;
Mines, ambuscades, and threat'ning walls
Are in its path; Death's arrow falls
Around it, day and night.

VI.

Nor in the rivalry of Minds
A trivial obstacle it finds
To its unbounded aim;
Oft in the breast the Passion lies,
Like fetter'd eagle with its eyes
Fix'd on the heights of Fame.

VII.

At ev'ry step man crosses man,
And thwarted by a deeper plan
Is ev'ry grand expedient ;
Fortune, as fickle as the winds,
Favours in turn with master-minds
Those of more dull ingredient.

VIII.

Yet, foster'd on her iron breast,
Should one perchance out-soar the rest
And hold the world's dominion,
Say! is he lord of time or place,
And may no earnest gazer trace
Scorch'd feathers in his pinion ?

IX.

Confined to this terrestrial sphere,
Man is the serf of ev'ry fear—
Wafted by ev'ry breath ;
The elements around him rave,
And in Life's midst, he is the slave
Of Misery and Death.

X.

Still, although stalking among chains,
The inner Pow'r unhar'm'd remains,
 Scornful of human sway—
Scornful of elements and ills,
Of Death himself, that only fills
 His bondage-house with clay.

XI.

And is its Destiny again
Environ'd with material chain,
 Re-usher'd into birth,
To live the same vain measure o'er
Of hopes and longings, as before,
 On some divided earth?

XII.

Ye minds, are idle dreamers then!
Ye stars, are dreams of slumb'ring men—
 Mere phantoms in the skies—
Ætherial sparks, that only blaze
Through Time and vanish from the gaze
 When Time's delusion flies!

XIII.

Say, is it so, thou inner Power !
Has the dark spirit of the hour
 Thy wav'ring faith controll'd ?
And in yon star-throngs scann'd by thee,
Doth not th' Infinite Mystery
 Its glittering seals unfold ?

XIV.

No dreamer thou !—no dreams are they !
Nor soar in inexpedient play
 Thy longings to the sky,
Like rockets by their aim design'd
For some far sphere, that on the wind
 Scarce venture, ere they die.

XV.

Thy element, Eternity ;
All holy Presences to thee
 Their kindred thoughts expand ;
Into a bow'r of welcome grown
Are the pure hopes of glory sown
 By Faith's heav'n-searching hand.

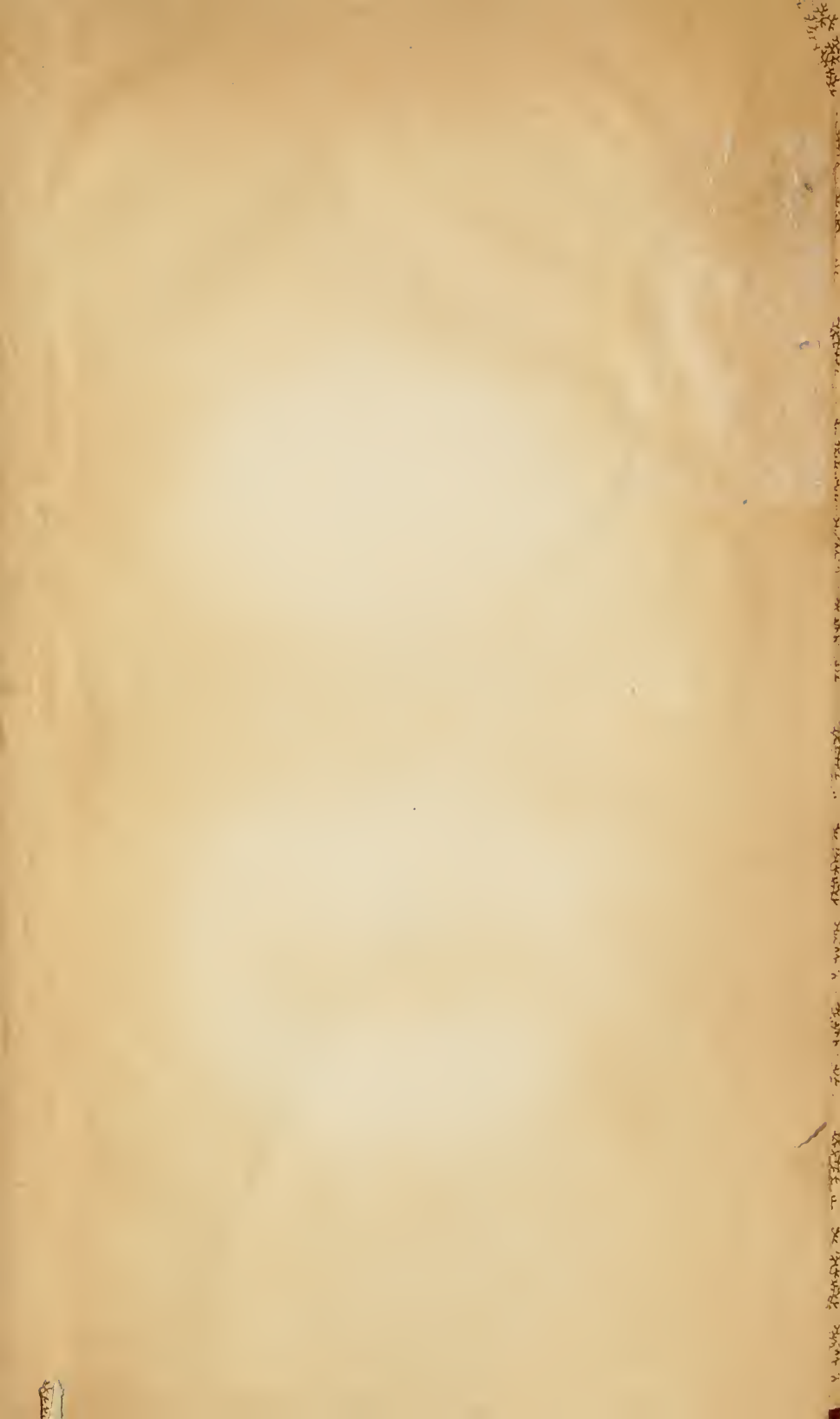
XVI.

Over thy dark, untravell'd realm,
Immensity ! no vent'rous helm
 May vain Ambition guide ;
The first rude surfs that bear him forth
Shall cast the Pilot back to earth,
 In their returning tide.

XVII.

Amid its Maker's hosts enshrined,
Star-seated reigns the sovereign Mind,
 From earthly passion free ;
Traced with the symbol of a dove
The banner of eternal Love
 Its peaceful canopy !

FINIS.





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